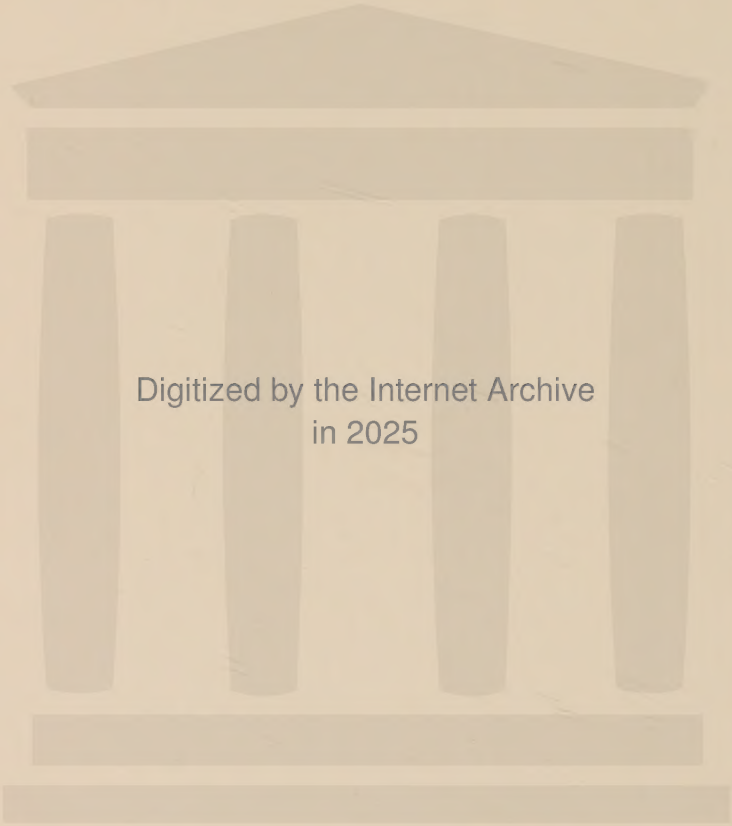
JACKSON LIBRARY-UNCG
3 0510 1164792 $

NEW BOOK

DATE DUE

SEP 3 1992

Walter Clinton Jackson Library
University of North Carolina at Greensboro
Greensboro, North Carolina 27412-5201


Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2025

https://archive.org/details/selectedproseofj0000gray_r6x6

Selected Prose of John Gray

The 1880–1920 British Authors Series

Number One

The Poems of John Gray
Edited by Ian Fletcher

Number Two

George Gissing at Work:
A Study of His Notebook 'Extracts of My Reading'
Pierre Coustillas & Patrick Bridgwater

Number Three

Rediscovering Herbert Horne:
Poet, Architect, Typographer, Art Historian
Ian Fletcher

Number Four

J. M. Barrie: An Annotated Secondary Bibliography
Carl Markgraf

Number Five

Arthur Symons: A Bibliography
Karl Beckson, Ian Fletcher, Lawrence W. Markert, John Stokes

Number Six

Pater in the 1990s
Edited by Laurel Brake & Ian Small

Number Seven

The Selected Prose of John Gray
Edited by Jerusha Hull McCormack

Number Eight

Oscar Wilde Revalued:
An Essay on New Materials and Methods of Research
Ian Small

PR
6013
R367A6
1992

The Selected Prose of John Gray

Jerusha Hull McCormack

Number Seven
in the
1880–1920 British Authors Series

ELT Press
of
English Literature in Transition, 1880–1920
University of North Carolina
Greensboro, NC 27412

Number Seven
in the
1880–1920 British Authors Series

Distributed in Europe
by
Colin Smythe, Ltd.
Gerrards Cross
Buckinghamshire
England SL9 8XA

Copyright ELT Press © 1992
All Rights Reserved
Acid–Free Paper ∞

ISBN 0–944318–06–8
Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data
92–081206

For

Dara, David and Thomas

Contents

Illustrations P. ix–x

Acknowledgements P. xi

Introduction: *Gray's Prose* P. xii

Selected Bibliography P. xxxiii

Editorial Principles P. xxxv

The Prose

Les Goncourt P. 1

The Great Worm P. 10

The Person in Question P. 18

The Modern Actor P. 29

The Loves of the Age of Stone P. 39

Old Gough P. 48

The Advantages of Civilization P. 57

The Yellow Princess P. 63

Their Mothers P. 68

The Redemption of Durtal P. 73

Niggard Truth P. 81

Light P. 99

Aubrey Beardsley P. 125

God—made and Machine—made P. 130

Winter Walking P. 138

Man's Visible Works P. 145

Hymns: A Suppressed Preface P. 152

Excursion P. 157

Trespassers Will Be Prosecuted P. 164

Dialogue P. 170

Park: a fantastic story P. 176

Notes to the Prose P. 292

About the Typography P. 316

Illustrations

Opposite page xii. Photograph. John Gray. Courtesy of Jerushal McCormack.

Opposite page 1. Photograph. John Gray. Courtesy of Jerusha McCormack.

Page 3. "Les Goncourt." Reproduction of opening word incorporated in design by Charles Ricketts from *The Dial*, 1 (1889), 9. Courtesy of David Schoonover, Curator of Rare Books, University of Iowa Library.

Page 11. "The Great Worm." Reproduction of lithograph by Charles Ricketts from *The Dial*, 1 (1889), 14. Courtesy of David Schoonover, Curator of Rare Books, University of Iowa Library.

Page 19. "The Person in Question." Initial letter design by David Schwartz. Commissioned by ELT Press.

Page 30. "The Modern Actor." Initial letter design by David Schwartz. Commissioned by ELT Press.

Opposite page 39. "The Loves of the Age of Stone." Reproduction of page from *The Butterfly*, 1 (July 1893), 142. Line drawing by Raven Hill. Courtesy of Emilie W. Mills, Special Collections & Archives, University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

Page 40. "The Loves of the Age of Stone." Initial letter design by David Schwartz. Commissioned by ELT Press.

Pages 42–45. "The Loves of the Age of Stone." Reproductions of line drawings by Raven Hill from *The Butterfly*, 1 (July 1893), 142–51. Courtesy of Emilie W. Mills, Special Collections & Archives, University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

Opposite page 48. "Old Gough." Reproduction of illustration by O. Eckhardt from *The Butterfly*, 1 (October 1893), 335–44. Courtesy of Emilie W. Mills, Special Collections & Archives, University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

Page 50. "Old Gough." Initial letter design by David Schwartz. Commissioned by ELT Press.

Pages 52–53. "Old Gough." Reproduction of illustrations by O. Eckhardt from *The Butterfly*, 1 (October 1893), 335–44. Courtesy of Emilie W. Mills, Special Collections & Archives, University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

Page 58. "The Advantages of Civilization." Initial letter design by David Schwartz. Commissioned by ELT Press.

Page 64. "The Yellow Princess." Initial letter design by David Schwartz. Commissioned by ELT Press.

Page 69. "Their Mothers." Initial letter design by David Schwartz. Commissioned by ELT Press.

Page 74. "The Redemption of Durtal." Reproduction of initial letter design, by Charles Ricketts or Charles Shannon?, *The Dial*, 4 (1896), 7. Courtesy of David Schoonover, Curator of Rare Books, University of Iowa Library.

Opposite page 83. Reproduction of title-page design, by Charles Shannon?, from *The Pageant* (1896). Courtesy of Jackson Library, University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

Page 83. "Niggard Truth." Reproduction of initial letter design, by Charles Shannon?, from *The Pageant*, 1 (1896), 20. Courtesy of Jackson Library, University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

Opposite page 101. Reproduction of title-page design, by Charles Shannon?, from *The Pageant* (1897). Courtesy of Jackson Library, University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

Page 101. "Light." Reproduction of initial letter design, by Charles Shannon?, from *The Pageant*, 1 (1897), 20. Courtesy of Jackson Library, University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

Page 126. "Aubrey Beardsley." Initial letter design by David Schwartz. Commissioned by ELT Press.

Opposite page 128. Reproduction of woodcut of Aubrey Beardsley's profile, by Félix Vallotton, from *La Revue Blanche*, 16 (1898). Courtesy of Jackson Library, University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

Page 131. "God–made and Machine–made." Initial letter design by David Schwartz. Commissioned by ELT Press.

Page 139. "Winter Walking." Initial letter design by David Schwartz. Commissioned by ELT Press.

Page 146. "Man's Visible Works." Initial letter design by David Schwartz. Commissioned by ELT Press.

Page 153. "Hymns: A Suppressed Preface." Initial letter design by David Schwartz. Commissioned by ELT Press.

Page 158. "Excursion." Initial letter design by David Schwartz. Commissioned by ELT Press.

Page 165. "Trespassers Will Be Prosecuted." Initial letter design by David Schwartz. Commissioned by ELT Press.

Page 171. "Dialogue." Initial letter design by David Schwartz. Commissioned by ELT Press.

Opposite page 179. *Park: a fantastic story*. Reproduction of copperplate designed by Denis Tegetmeier. From limited edition, Sheed and Ward, 1932. Courtesy of Jill Rosenshield, Associate Curator, Rare Books and Special Collections, University of Wisconsin at Madison.

Acknowledgements

I WISH TO THANK Father Timothy Radcliffe, O.P., Prior Provincial of the Dominican Order in England, for permission to use the Gray material, both written and photographic, originally from their archives in Blackfriars, Edinburgh, and now in the National Library of Scotland. My thanks also to Alan Anderson, who kindly gave permission for the use of his translation of John Gray's memoir of Aubrey Beardsley.

For debts scholarly, I wish to name in particular Dr. Vera Regan of University College, Dublin, for assistance in translations from the French and to Father Joseph Brennan, S.J., of the Gonzaga Community in Dublin, who sorted out my attempts to English Gray's church Latin and to explain (by means of the notes) the subtleties of Pre–Vatican II Roman Catholic ritual. The task of editing the manuscript has been considerably lightened by David Schwartz and Janet Stites of ELT Press.

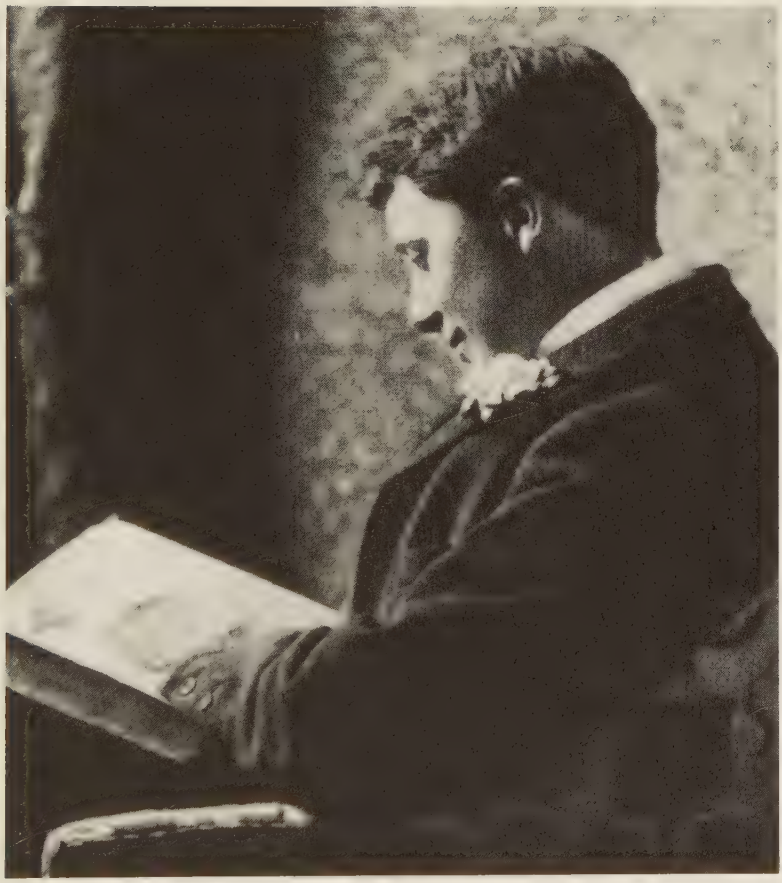
No one has shown more forbearance than my husband, Dara, who has been dispatched on numerous wild-goose chases after obscure references; the effort over the years to build up a decent reference library has at last justified itself. Finally, David and Thomas: I won't embarrass you by saying how much you helped.

Introduction: John Gray's Prose

TO MOST READERS, John Gray is known, if at all, as a minor poet of the nineties. Almost every anthology of the decade lists two or three of his poems, usually taken from his first book, *Silverpoints*. Published in 1893, *Silverpoints* achieved a certain notoriety for its "decadent" verse, although its reputation may have sprung, at least in part, from Gray's own notoriety as the reputed model for Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray*. A confidante of Wilde's, Ada Leverson, echoes the contemporary estimate when she recalls John Gray as "the incomparable poet of the age."[1]

The "incomparable" poet has received his due, not only in the anthologies but, most recently, in Ian Fletcher's edition of *The Poems of John Gray*.[2] As a collection the poems turn out to be, after all, comparable: Fletcher's edition places Gray securely in the company of his colleagues and friends, Lionel Johnson and Ernest Dowson—a minor but nevertheless accomplished poet of a certain place and time. Unlike Johnson and Dowson, however, Gray survived to write poetry of a recognizably modern tone and temper. Thus his career offers a modest but significant register of the revolution in poetic technique between the last decade of the reign of Queen Victoria and the years after the Great War.

What most people do not know is that during this period John Gray also wrote prose, all sorts of prose: essays, reviews, translations, introductions, short stories, and one rather startling novella. In doing so, Gray was typical of his time. "It would not be easy," Holbrook Jackson wrote, "to point to another decade in which English literature produced so many varieties of fiction."[3] Or so many varieties of



prose: it was the golden age of the artistic manifesto, the critical review and (a creature now almost defunct) the *belles-lettres* essay. For the short story, it was a crucial period during which the form was first conceded the status of an art. The commercial demands of the "little magazine" had much to do with its new popularity. Looking back at the decade, H. G. Wells commented on how styles of different journals stimulated the production of shorter fiction, ranging from the insistence of *The National Observer* "upon lyrical brevity and a vivid finish" to the appreciative *clientele* of *The Fortnightly Review* and the "generous opportunities" of *The Yellow Book*. Consequently, "short stories broke out everywhere."[4] In hindsight we may date from the nineties the emergence of the short story as a distinct genre and note in passing the crucial role it played in the evolution of such major writers as James, Hardy, Kipling and Conrad.

In acknowledgement of this role, much of this decade's shorter fiction has already been collected and reprinted. Yet Gray's best work in prose was either not published during his lifetime or dropped immediately after publication into obscurity. With one exception: his novella *Park* has been reissued twice since his death in 1934. Its qualities suggest why a selection of Gray's prose merits our attention. In an age when every word was written with intention, Gray's best prose is at once clean and sharp, condensed and clever. At times it verges on the epigrammatic; at others, falls into the enigmatic. The puzzles of *Park* tease one into rich speculation; it is the mandarin style at its pitch. Among a certain circle of readers, *Park* holds its reputation as having the refinements of "a dry patrician wine."[5]

From this book alone, one might argue that Gray actually wrote better prose than poetry. But the virtues of *Park* might also suggest why Gray's prose is not yet better known. Gray sought to make his name as a poet, not a prose writer. Notorious as the avatar of a certain vogue, the fashioning of his poetry was also tied into his self-fashioning as the "decadent" poet and disciple of Wilde, "Dorian" Gray.[6] It was, to a large extent, a public poetry, a poetry of performance.

Speaking in the voice of the dramatized self, the mime and the mocker, the poetry of *Silverpoints* gives itself over to the spectacle of its own disintegration. In contrast, the prose of the period tends to offer a kind of subtext to this spectacle. In a story of the same period, "The Person in Question," Gray seeks to confront his alienated self in an attempt to regain wholeness and sanity. The story is, at least in intention, confessional. Thus in contrast to the poetry, the prose tends on the whole to be more probing, more authentic: to the point where it may in fact be of such an intimate nature that it was not to be published during his own lifetime.

Not all of Gray's prose was of such a closeted nature. But even in those pieces which are apparently devoid of personal reference—such as the religious stories—their impulse is so urgent, and the nature of the crisis so obscure, that they demand to be extended to the biographical. In short, I do not think it possible to account adequately for Gray's prose without invoking his history and his own relation to it.

Gray was born in 1866 to a working-class family. Pulled out of school at thirteen to be apprenticed as a metal-turner in the Woolwich Arsenal, Gray educated himself in order to sit the civil service exams, initially for a position in the Post Office, later in the Foreign Office. Thus by dint of his own efforts he crossed the invisible barrier between those who worked with their hands and those who worked with their heads. Still a barrier today, in Gray's world it was almost a Chinese Wall.

Gray climbed the wall virtually on his own. But he was, as he claimed in his own words, "an invention" of an exceptional man, Charles Ricketts, whom he met in 1888-1889.[7] An artist, printer and engraver, connoisseur and collector, Ricketts together with his partner Charles Shannon adopted Gray as their "disciple." He joined their extraordinary circle (which included Yeats and Wilde) at about the time they had decided to launch a revolutionary new journal, *The*

Dial. For this, they persuaded Gray to write two pieces. One, a fairy tale about "The Great Worm," pays tribute to the arch, whimsical style of Wilde, soon to become another mentor.[8] The second, a critical piece on the Goncourt brothers, was to draw Gray into the revolutionary aesthetics of France, to which Ricketts had introduced him.[9] In the Goncourt article, Gray launches himself on a career as an importer of French literary fashion into England—a reputation sealed by his extensive translations of the new French poets for *Silverpoints*. In this role, Gray's contribution was to prove second only to another poet/translator, that of his friend Arthur Symons.

From the very first, then, Gray published only in the most severely limited outlets: the new periodicals that were to become home ground for the artistic experiments of the English artist. For the established writer, these were a boon, but for the younger, they could be a mixed blessing. He might make the name of the new journal, but the journal would not necessarily make his. Aubrey Beardsley lived to bury *The Yellow Book*, but at its demise it almost buried him. The magazines which published Gray had an even more modest circulation, and are very difficult to find in libraries today: *The Dial*, *The Butterfly*, *The Pageant*. Aware that his exposure was restricted by such outlets, Gray approached John Lane in December 1893 with a proposal for publication of a collection of his short stories.[10] Although the Bodley Head published that month a landmark in nineties prose—George Egerton's *Keynotes*—Lane and his partner Elkin Mathews disagreed about the value of the new "realistic" fiction and were, in fact, about to break up the partnership over just such disagreements.[11] John Lane rejected Gray's proposal. Consequently, it was only in the 1920s, when he began to publish in the new periodical *Blackfriars*, that Gray's prose achieved a readership beyond that of the coterie.

Gray had been urged to write by Ricketts, although his mentor also told him on one occasion (as Gray recalls) that he could not relate plots.[12] In fact, as one letter to Gray from an editor indicates,

sometimes plots were actually dictated to him.[13] A certain deadness in several stories does suggest that occasionally Gray wrote to order. Like many a young writer, Gray was insecure in his models and imitative in style. But as he gained confidence, he began to write from experience and the stories spring to life. "Old Gough" is the first tale clearly taken from Gray's adolescence, when he worked at the Woolwich Arsenal.[14] Like Old Gough, Gray's father was a wheelwright. Here Gray deploys his knowledge of wheelmaking—and the working man—to tell a quiet, exact, almost cold fable about early trade union politics—and human perversity. "Old Gough" exploits the new (and controversial) naturalistic narrative to its full. It may also claim a place as one of those stories which helped to establish the working-class as a fashionable subject for literature during the ensuring decade.

Gray draws again on his knowledge of low-life for his lecture-essay, "The Modern Actor."[15] In tones that approach that of manifesto, Gray declaimed that the poet was not only a performer, but an outcast, the equivalent of the medieval juggler or the vaudeville comedian. Yet he predicts the actor of the new age will not be the idolized personality of the legitimate stage but the despised *artiste* of the music-hall. For us, Gray's prescience is confirmed after the turn of the century by the theatre of Beckett and Brecht. For his own audience it was equally startling, but mainly as a model of perversity. Based on Wilde's essays both in intention and method, Gray's lecture revelled in self-conscious and even self-mocking paradox. Its paradox was, moreover, one Gray consciously enacted in the lecture performance itself: a precious discourse delivered by an impeccably dressed dandy who had still not lost the inflections of his Cockney accent. As it turned out, "The Modern Actor" was to cap Gray's own career in paradox—and precipitate its end.

John Gray delivered the original "Modern Actor" lecture to the fashionable audience of the Playgoers' Club in the company of Oscar Wilde. Reviewing that performance, *The Star* newspaper commented

that Gray was "the original Dorian of the same name."[16] Although Gray threatened suit and *The Star* handsomely withdrew its allegation, the rumour that Gray was Wilde's "disciple" and, to a certain extent, his creature had taken on a life of its own. Despite public denials, Gray would describe Wilde as "my beloved master my dear friend."[17] Wilde in return valued him as a poet, offering to underwrite the cost of his first book of poetry, *Silverpoints*. Their relationship, however, did not survive Wilde's own infatuation with Alfred Douglas. During 1892, Gray began to withdraw from Wilde's company, finally breaking with him altogether in early 1893.

The break was not merely painful, but devastating. At its pitch, Gray was dramatically ill and consumed by thoughts of suicide. In the wake of these stormy months Gray wrote some of his best prose. These stories, however, were not published during his lifetime. They were found, neatly typed, among his papers after his death. It is not difficult to see why they were not put out for publication. The longest, entitled "The Person in Question," is explicitly written at the request of a friend, as an examination of the author's peculiar state of mind.[18] He believes he is haunted: a double shadows him everywhere, but a double whose resemblance only he himself perceives and whose independent existence nobody questions. The double's identity with himself he knows to be an illusion. But it is an illusion based on a prescient act of the imagination: the double is an image not of what he is but of what he will become, a kind of ghost of the future. Once he acknowledges this identity, the writer develops a curious dependency; when his double disappears, he is disoriented and anxious. But when he reappears, he commits an act which shatters the illusion of identity, and, by so doing, shatters also the author's own self-image. It is now he, and not this apparition, who has become the person in question.

The Jamesian subtlety of the tale disguises its origins. For one who knows Gray's history, the doubling and duplicity of the *doppelgänger* tale—now an accredited means of psychological analysis—eerily

mirror Gray's own relationship with Wilde. His friendship with Wilde entailed disowning his past as John Gray in order to make his public entrance as "Dorian": exquisite dandy, disciple, and reputed model for Wilde's novella of that name. It is as "Dorian" Gray that he made his name as a poet. Consequently, when he broke with Wilde and tried to escape his reputation, Gray fell apart, both physically and psychically. In the event, he was rescued by another mentor, a rich Parisian Jew by the name of André Raffalovich, who eventually became a devoted and life-long friend. At first, it is clear, Gray could not respond to Raffalovich's overtures. Having painfully broken with Wilde, he found he could not trust himself to another such friendship. Gray explores his dilemma, and its resulting emotional anaesthesia, in a stark, original tale, "The Yellow Princess."[19]

The Princess's colour is obviously that of her money and her status as a "golden girl." But, more than that, yellow is "the colour of the hour, the symbol of the time-spirit," as Holbrook Jackson puts it in *The Eighteen Nineties*.[20] As one who marks the fashion of the hour, Gray's princess is a cogent symbol. One of the "new women," her status and wealth brings her a freedom usually denied the upper-class Victorian lady. Moreover, she exercises her freedom in the most crucial act open to her: by choosing whom to marry. She chooses in the name of "love," but that designation turns to dust when she inadvertently returns the kiss of another. "Love" is hollow in the face of the promiscuity—one might say impersonality—of the sexual instinct: a discovery Sue Bridehead and Jude Frawley were also to make.

And yet the Princess's self-destructive dilemma is not only that of the "new woman." She is such a potent figure exactly because she embodies the intelligence of the dandy, who sees through the social sham of romance and fashionable marriage. Thus her ultimate lack of discrimination is depicted as a failure of taste: what can one expect of a connoisseur of opera who is as satisfied with Mascagni as with Verdi? By the end of the story, the Princess is again free, although her

freedom is now the negative freedom of disillusionment and her yellow colour that of the bitterness of spiritual bile.

Something of that bile infuses another unpublished short story, "Their Mothers."[21] An analysis of the sexual politics of a fashionable marriage, it employs the brittle ironies of a Beardsley drawing, its flatness of tone the perfect foil for the outrages of the situation.

Why it, like "The Yellow Princess," remained unpublished is unknown. Perhaps Gray felt the essential ugliness of the story rendered it unfit for publication (although Henry James covered much the same ground in *What Maisie Knew*). But Gray's orientation also had changed. In the midst of his disillusion, at first almost imperceptibly, then visibly, there began to grow a new commitment, one which was to make other commitments possible.

Religion found John Gray. How it arrived, how greeted, how it worked its slow, inevitable transformation, is the subject of two of his finest stories, "Niggard Truth" (1896) and "Light" (1897).[22] What these stories emphasize, in contrast to the standard Victorian conversion tale, is the *ordinariness* of the experience. In the first, Harriet, a capable but otherwise nondescript woman, marries the minister of her "chapel" to whom she devotes her life. Her spiritual gifts make her not only an inspired director of her husband's career, but also a proud (and slightly acquisitive) housewife. Her exemplary domestic management both of the household and husband leads to that kind of success which is clearly the result of divine grace. A strange theme for an erstwhile "decadent" poet, but one that points to the practical (one might even say, Protestant) turn to Gray's spirituality as well as his detailed knowledge of "chapel" (i.e. Evangelical) sects, to which his family most probably belonged.

"Light," the second and more compelling of Gray's conversion tales, centres again on an ordinary, unnamed woman. The wife of a smith, the routine of her life is transfigured by the discovery of a poem of Jacopone da Todi: "O Love, all love above." Although a

"chapel" Protestant, instinctively distrustful of all that she knows to be "Popery," the poem, and the spiritual impulse behind it, gradually usurp her whole consciousness, until she dies—raving, according to the village. Her husband alone intuits her holiness, although he does not understand it.

For Gray, the spirit flows from the word. He had seen his own life shaped and subverted by Wilde's novel, just as the fictional Dorian Gray had himself been corrupted by a "fatal book." Now, in a new dispensation, Gray proposes that there can be, on the contrary, a "sacred book," one which will redeem. Gray himself found it in a book of poems by Jacopone da Todi which, according to an early biographer, he discovered much as his heroine came upon it in the window of a bookshop.[23] Subsequently, a translation of "O Love, all love above" was to form the nucleus of his *Spiritual Poems*, published in 1896, a year before this story. In one sense, the eclectic collation, gathered from different poets of different periods in different languages, represents Gray's own sacred talismans.

Still other texts were to provide Gray with a map to his own experience. Reviewing two novels, *Là-Bas* (1891) and *En Route* (1895), Gray traces J.-K. Huymans's murky path from the "inverted spiritism" of his decadent hero to his orthodox repentance and conversion. In his essay on "The Redemption of Durtal," Gray is at great pains to point out that this path, however esoteric its beginnings, is singularly devoid of the glamour of "miracles"; that it is, in fact, a particular vulgarity of Durtal that he should seek "a theatrical sign" of divine grace.[24]

Yet in his own life, his spiritual awakening was through a series of shocks and jolts: first, the conversion of Gray's now close friend, André Raffalovich, to Catholicism and, subsequently, of their mutual acquaintance, Aubrey Beardsley. His conversion was to become for Gray and Raffalovich a sign, both of the death of the old order of the "decadent" nineties and a foretelling of the new dispensation of

grace. Gray marked its passing in an obituary memoir for the prestigious French journal, *La Revue Blanche*; he was prescient in naming Beardsley a "genius" and predicting his name would come to define not merely his own style but that of an entire period.[25]

Some months before the death of Beardsley, Gray had taken leave from his position in the Foreign Office to make a week's retreat with the Jesuits. He emerged confirmed in a new vocation. By the next autumn he was installed as a student in Scots College, Rome, a candidate for the priesthood. Four years later, in 1902, Father Gray took up the curacy of St. Patrick's Church in the Cowgate, Edinburgh, then one of the worst slums in England. Except for letters, writing now came under the category of dissipation. (The letters themselves—hard-headed, keen-eyed and, most of all, the products of an applied intelligence—augur the writer who was to emerge from an authorial silence of virtually twenty years.) Father Gray did try to force himself into the rule of two hours' intellectual work a day by undertaking translations of theological works. And, in an effort to correct Beardsley's "decadent" reputation, he edited a selection of Beardsley's letters to himself and Raffalovich with an introduction which stressed the spiritualizing effects of Beardsley's tuberculosis.[26] All of these, as well as the sermons, children's plays, the editing of a missionary journal and an obituary notice of a loved pastor, show Father Gray putting his art at the service of his vocation.

Not until twenty-odd years later did Gray write for himself, when he was offered a chance to publish in a new journal put out by the Oxford Dominicans, *Blackfriars*. There followed, in the last ten years of his life, a modest tide of essays and poems, culminating in the serial publication of his one novella, *Park*. The essays were conducted in the spirit of the word: as trial pieces, attempts to articulate his own short excursions out of Edinburgh. Father Gray had become a formidable hill-walker, taking his holiday yearly in the Cotswolds and, for diversion between times, often setting out on a Sunday after tea and walking through the night. Other walks took him around the

Scottish islands (Eriskay and Skye being favourites) and around Iceland, as well as across parts of France and northern Italy. The essays, however, largely confine him to home ground, in more senses than one. They have much in common with his sermons, starting off on an apparent tangent and ranging widely before homing in on a certain scene and a certain sense made of it. "No matter where or how he begins," one parishioner remarked appreciatively, Father Gray "always brings us into the terminus."[27]

Essentially meditations, the essays move easily from complex, almost overloaded observation to pithy comment. There is a roominess about them; they take their time, they ruminate, they breathe. Their particular rhythm is one of their great merits; the landscape sketches are meticulous and detailed, the allusion rich (and elusive), but all is carried on with an impetus of wit and ripe pleasure, both in the actual excursion and intellectual assay it provokes.

Several are only tangentially located: "God-made and Machine-made" meditates on the value of mechanical invention, from that of the "yomph" of the motor-car to the factory-produced biscuit. No Luddite, Gray rejoices in the freedom of the invented, but, as an artist, regrets only the little individual touches that used to distinguish the hand-made from the mass-produced.[28] In "Hymns: A Suppressed Preface," Father Gray laments the "self-complacent trash" that passes as sacred praise. Hymn-writing should, he opines, be considered a skill, and "the result should rather resemble the call of a bird than a pattern of hotel wallpaper."[29] In another of his later essays, Gray playfully engages the wording of the ubiquitous sign "Trespassers Will Be Prosecuted."[30] Once and once only, he goes in for the kind of *tour-de-force* wordplay we associate with Joyce. "Dialogue" opens with the *New English Dictionary*'s entry on "orange," gallops through several choice definitions and examples before ending with its consumption: "Cut it through the equator, then across the poles; then imagine you are a meritorious negro."[31]

That figure of the "meritorious negro" was, oddly enough, to compose the centre of his last and finest prose piece, the novella *Park*. He in fact appears earlier in a nineties story, "The Advantages of Civilization," in the guise of "Master of Arts, bachelor of sciences, doctor of medicine, doctor of divinity, doctor of laws, doctor of all faculties, academically honourable in all English-speaking lands, correspondent of all learned societies, honorary member of the Helsingfors guild of boat-builders, chevalier of the profound order of the iron cross of Patagonia, member of the Abutabu municipality, wonderful, mighty . . . Zaccheus Bishop."[32] A Fijian and a son of the New Methodist Missionary Society, on leave in London, he is taken, with a strong bodyguard of seminarians, to visit the British Museum, where he scandalizes the company by admiring the magnificent physique of the Apollo Citharaedus, and, while advancing some arcane information about the whereabouts of the missing hands of the statute, posits a final question as to how the magnificent chest might (were it a shoulder of mutton) be carved for dinner.

Not for the first time, the joke was on the white man. Working in the Foreign Office and having at least three relatives living at different times in British territory abroad, Gray was inevitably exposed to some of the more cutting ironies of British imperialism. His interest in the primitive, evident in the short story "The Loves of the Age of Stone," would also have persuaded him of its sophistication. Perhaps, too, coming from the margins of established society, he thought of himself as a kind of barbarian, one who has a new kind of freedom because he understands, as society cannot, the artifices by which it constructs "civilization."

Gray's sense of the primitive was thus aesthetic rather than political, although, according to one of his sisters, his interest in the black man led him to foretell "in a general way that the black man would rule."[33] Gray explores the implications of this fantasy in his one novella, *Park*, published in 1932. Ostensibly, *Park* is placed in a world of black men. But the location is not Africa but some latter-day

England in which the white men have been driven underground to live in a facsimile of the London Gray knew in the nineties. Above ground, England has returned to a rural, pastoral existence; the car has been replaced by the horse, and the landscape dotted with large country estates. But the medieval is not a mere fortress against the modern. In the land of the blacks, there has been a great advance in technological sophistication: they communicate with each other by telescreen, a kind of video telephone. Thus in the upper world, the Morris-medieval cohabits with the post-modern world of H. G. Wells, although the simplest identification (in a novel that is anything but simple) is with the world of the Catholic Church. For the blacks of the upper world are almost universally priests, and their government is hierarchical, autocratic and, with few exceptions, male.

The hero of this tale enters this world while on an excursion: "Mungo Park walked on in the belief, absurd as he knew it to be, that he had died." He was on the Oxford road, going eastward, when the silence took on a quality of the absolute and the road seemed "just faintly different." Then a note, sweet and prolonged, brings him to a stop. He is peppered with birdshot, assailed by a short, powerful black man, a gamekeeper as it turns out, who answers him in Latin. He is taken to a cabin and there initiated into the society of blacks, their costume, food, language, and strange ways of the Wapami, as they call themselves: "I shall never be back in time, he groaned. I shall never be back in time. Every thought has two meanings." Park has left chronological time, and without its reckoning he cannot establish his identity. History itself has taken on a violent discontinuity, signified by the split between upper and lower world, that of the present theocratic order and that of the past, literally a decadent underworld: in terms of topography, a graphic illustration of Gray's own history, and the discontinuity between Father Gray and "Dorian" Gray.

The issue of *Park* becomes, therefore, that of the identity of Mungo Park himself. It is, as Gray subtitled it, a "fantastic story" based in

part on the actual history of the Scottish Mungo Park, an eighteenth-century African explorer, who set out on his second expedition to discover the source of the river Niger. He never returned.[34] But Mungo Park is also a facsimile of Father Gray: a priest who goes on long excursions and for whom walking is "an ambit in imaginary space."[35] That space defined in *Park*—the story of Park who inherits an estate named Park—is nothing less than a map of a psychological excursion into the question of his identity. The fictional Park is dogged, from the very first, by the questions of his origin and purpose. Being out of chronological time, he defines himself in common with his companion and alter-ego, Dlar, as one of the "dead." But he insists on being accepted as a priest. Finally, the Wapami set up an official investigation into the matter. At the close of the novel, they issue a report, which is in part a detailed description of Father Gray, but also full of suppositions which Park/Gray does not himself recognize. "Filled with error, I suppose," Park is asked. "Yes, sir; as far as I am competent to judge," is the ambiguous reply. For of whom can Park judge, if not of himself? And why must he accept a report which represents only a counterfeit Park/Gray, a simulacrum of himself?

The narrative ends with Park awakening on the Oxford Road, going eastward, the status of his vision uncertain. During its opening sequences, Park thinks himself in a dream and meditates: "That is a strange thing, he thought; to dream a fact I did not know awake. I am black." This echoes a sentiment Gray expressed to his sister once: that although he was a white man, he was black inside.[36] An ironic reversal of Blake's "Little Black Boy"? Or a commentary on the religious order in whose journal he first published *Park*, the Dominicans, known familiarly as the Blackfriars? (Gray had become, in the early years of the century, a Third Order Dominican.) Or, more generally, did this "black" quality, also linked with his conviction that he is "dead," speak of his spiritual commitment to the priesthood, robed in black as a symbol of his death to the world?

These are only some of the puzzles of an enigmatic tale. Where they may be explicated, they tend to lead directly back to Gray's own interior life: his reading, his preoccupations, and a kind of spiritual nausea that has to do with the disorientation of his own life. A survivor of the nineties, Gray encapsulated the world of that decade in the underworld of *Park*, a kind of *fin-de-siècle* turned *fin-du-globe*. The violent discontinuity between these worlds is signified by the overthrow of the white population by the empire of the blacks; and in his own life by "Dorian" Gray's rejection of his invented self to become Father Gray. On a larger scale, that discontinuity represents the catastrophe of the Great War, which left the survivors of the nineties stranded, like Ezra Pound's Monsieur Verog, "out of step with the decade," immured among his reminiscences.[37] Gray tried to escape this fate by writing his way out of it. As we have seen, the views on modern life—such as his attitude to technology—were scarcely reactionary. One might argue, in fact, that *Park* represents a last, extreme attempt to integrate not only himself, but the disparate worlds he had come to represent: those of Victorian and modern, secular and sacred, working-class and mandarin.

In this attempt, Gray appropriated many models (he had always had a taste for the eclectic).[38] Like Piers Plowman's vision of a Pre-Reformation England, Gray looks back in *Park* to an era before a great cataclysm. Like William Morris, H. G. Wells, and Richard Jefferies, he contemplates the emergence of a post-modern England. But its many sources do not explain; ultimately *Park* remains enigmatic, in the words of one who knew his circle, "positively oriental in its false doors and booby-traps."[39] And despite its sly humour, it is also often a desperate tale. For in *Park* Gray has literally entered the No-Man's Land where his own identity admits its fabrications, a territory he once described elsewhere as that "rich ground which hangs between Life and Death."[40] As Park of Park, he has come into the inheritance of that estate, which he enjoys as priest, officially dead to the world, but alive to the vitality of the spirit. Like Pater's

Mona Lisa, Gray has been "dead many times," but has reincarnated himself by an enduring act of the imagination.

To those who have their finger on the John Gray's pulse, who have read the poems and the prose, *Park* also represents, as little else can, the compass and content of this imagination. Its distinctive mode of procedure in the early tales is ironic, constructed around the sterile dilemmas of "Old Gouth" or "The Person in Question" or "The Yellow Princess" or "Their Mothers." All of these tales end in a kind of paralysis. Unlike the fables of Wilde, to which they bear some resemblance, their impulse is in fact moral rather than aesthetic: they are emblems of the death of the spirit so brilliantly inscribed by Joyce's various *Dubliners*. Like Joyce's characters, those of Gray are betrayed into a kind of living death by their own principled behaviour; but the principles are abstract and self-defeating. They defeat the spirit because they are not of the spirit.

Gray's own conversion is mirrored in tales which tell the opposite story: the release from principle into the spirit, which dictates to its subjects their course of action. When Gray returns to writing, the essays themselves show a confidence, a willingness to take risks and an acceptance that intellectual observation must arise from, and be justified by, experience. In *Park* one can locate a kind of summation. The self-defeating logic of "Dorian" Gray reappears in the mixture of satire and wish-fulfillment, torment and longing, which set its emotional tone. But from the first there is a willed submission to the dream-vision, a patience with its work and with the sheer gravity of its experience; thus the story vibrates with a kind of wisdom and compassion rare for its genre.

That discipline owes much to Gray's education as a priest. Whereas it has been noted that the precision and brevity of his earlier pieces may be the result his civil service training in writing *precis*, the clarity and amplitude of *Park* may be traced to Gray's study of Thomas Acquinas.[41] In the procedures of Acquinas, the medieval has served

to direct the intellectual discipline of the modern, as in many respects it did for the master modernist himself, James Joyce. It would seem suitable, therefore, that the Thomistic criteria invoked by his hero, Stephen Daedalus, in defining beauty should be those directing the selection for this edition of Gray's prose: integrity, harmony and an apprehension of the essence of the thing, which Stephen defines as the "silent stasis of esthetic pleasure."

At its best, Gray's prose does more than aspire to these criteria. For, as I have tried to show, their agenda is often a desperate one, no less than an attempt to integrate Gray's own psyche. At times, this personal agenda makes the prose flawed or baffling: some of the allusions are too private, significant to only the author and a small audience. At other times, this very urgency gives focus; we are patient with the prose because we sense it has something to say to us. Almost always, it seeks to teach, but where the lessons fail, Gray seeks to show that bewilderment itself may be of value. Before the cruel mysteries of unintelligibility and death, *Park* implies, clarity itself may be too expensive.

In sum, one would not claim greatness for John Gray. It is a claim he would not himself aspire to. Yet it remains an honorable thing to reclaim his work. On its own merits, Gray's prose is well written and peculiarly honest: it has *earned* its passage. In this sense, its very intimacy is a kind of guarantee that Gray speaks from experience. But more than this, Gray has a significance for his time as a writer who made the transition from the mannered decadence of "The Modern Actor" to the cryptic pre-modernist narrative of *Park*. As such, his work helps us reconstruct our own past: in particular, it requires us to acknowledge that abyss which lies between the late Victorian and the years after the Great War. As one who survived, not only personally but as a writer, Gray allows us to speculate on the strategies by which he sought to bridge that chasm. And in so doing, John Gray's work may provide an example of how, on the edge of greater chasms, we may still presume to tell stories and to feel, in telling

them, that they are permitted to tell us something about our experience—and ourselves.

Notes

1. Violet Wyndham, "Reminiscences, by Ada Leverson; I. The Importance of Being Oscar," *The Sphinx and Her Circle: A Biographical Sketch of Ada Leverson, 1862–1933* (London: André Deutsch, 1963), 105.

2. Ian Fletcher, ed., *The Poems of John Gray* (Greensboro: ELT Press, 1988).

3. *The Eighteen Nineties: A Review of Art and Ideas at the Close of the Nineteenth Century*, The Life and Letters Series, No. 17 (London: Jonathan Cape, 1931), 227.

4. Ibid., 228–29.

5. Walter Shewring, "Two Friends," *Two Friends: John Gray & André Raffalovich*, Brocard Sewell, ed. (Aylesford, Kent: Saint Albert's Press, 1963), 150.

6. Cf. Jerusha Hull McCormack, *John Gray: Poet, Dandy, & Priest* (Hanover: University Press of New England, 1991), particularly the chapter on *Silverpoints*, 103–41.

7. John Gray to Gordon Bottomley, 3 February 1933. Papers of Richard Lancelyn Green. For an account of Gray's involvement in the Shannon/Ricketts circle, cf. McCormack, *John Gray*, 21–33.

8. *The Dial*, 1 (1889), 14–18.

9. Ibid., 9–13.

10. John Gray to John Lane, 11 December 1893. Henry W. and Albert A. Berg Collection, New York Public Library.

11. James G. Nelson, *The Early Nineties: A View from the Bodley Head* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971), 262–65.

12. John Gray to Michael Field (Katherine Bradley), 10 March 1909, Berg Collection, New York Public Library.

13. Letter to John Gray (last page and signature missing, no date). Gray papers, Dominican Chaplaincy, Edinburgh.

14. *The Butterfly*, 1 (October 1893), 335–44.

15. *The Albemarle: A Monthly Review*, 2, no. 1 (July 1892), 20–24.

16. *The Star*, 6 February 1892, quoted in Patricio Gannon's "John Gray: The Prince of Dreams," in *Two Friends*, 108.

17. Dedication, in Gray's hand, of his translation of Paul Bourget's *A Saint and Others* (London: James R. Osgood, McIlvaine and Co., 1892) in the Wilde collection, Houghton Library, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

18. *The Person in Question*, Patricio Gannon, ed. (Buenos Aires: Colombo, 1958), 26.

19. Gray papers, Dominican Chaplaincy, Edinburgh.

20. *The Eighteen Nineties*, 49.

21. Gray papers, Dominican Chaplaincy, Edinburgh.

22. *The Pageant*, 1 (1896), 20–36; and *The Pageant*, 2 (1897), 113–34.

23. From the notes of Gray's first biographer, Helen Trudgian, who presumably got this information from Gray's sister, Beatrice (later Sister Mary Raphael) Gray. Trudgian papers, Dominican Chaplaincy, Edinburgh.

24. "The Redemption of Durtal," *The Dial*, 4 (1896), 10.

25. "Aubrey Beardsley," *La Revue Blanche*, 16 (1898), 68–70.

26. Introduction, *Last Letters of Aubrey Beardsley*, Rev. John Gray, ed. (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1904), v–ix.

27. Edwin Essex, O.P., "The Canon in Residence," in *Two Friends*, 162.

28. *Blackfriars*, 5 (November 1924), 451–57.

29. Ibid., 6 (October 1925), 580.

30. Ibid., 9 (March 1928), 164–69.

31. Ibid. (May 1928), 308.

32. *The Butterfly*, 2 (November 1894), 51.

33. Beatrice Gray (Sister Mary Raphael) quoted by Alexandra Zaina, "The Prose Writings of John Gray," in *Two Friends*, 95.

34. Mungo Park's *Travels into the Interior of Africa* (1799) is one of the main sources for *Park*. For other sources, see note 38 below.

35. "Winter Walking," *Blackfriars*, 6 (March 1925), 151.

36. Quoted in Zaina, "Prose Writings," in *Two Friends*, 95.

37. "Hugh Selwyn Mauberley (Life and Contacts)." Pound's M. Verog satirized one of Gray's contemporaries, the nineties poet Victor Plarr.

38. For sources of *Park*, cf. Zaina, "Prose Writings," in *Two Friends*, 95–96; and Philip Healy, ed., "Afterword," *Park* (London: Carcanet, 1984), 118–21.

39. Alan Neame to Brocard Sewell, 27 October 1964. Papers of Brocard Sewell.

40. John Gray to Pierre Louÿs, 24 November 1892, "John Gray's Letters to Pierre Louÿs," Peter Vernon, ed. *Revue de Littérature Comparée*, 53 (Janvier–Mars 1979), 96.

41. Peter Vernon, "The Letters of John Gray" (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of London, 1976), p. 13, made the valuable point about Gray's civil service training. The debt to Acquinas and its relation to the modern movement is noted by Philip Healy, ed., "Afterword," *Park*, p. 127.

Selected Bibliography

Bergonzi, Bernard. "Introduction," *Park*. Aylesford, Kent: Saint Albert's Press, 1966, i–viii.

Essex, Father Edwin. "The Canon in Residence," in *Two Friends: John Gray & André Raffalovich. Essays Biographical and Critical*. Brocard Sewell, ed. Aylesford, Kent: Saint Albert's Press, 1963, 152–66.

Fletcher, Ian, ed. *The Poems of John Gray*. Greensboro: ELT Press, 1988.

Healy, Philip. "Afterword," *Park*. Manchester: Carcanet Press, 1984, 115–28.

McCormack, Jerusha Hull. *John Gray: Poet, Dandy & Priest*. Hanover: University Press of New England, 1991.

Murray, Isobel. "John Gray: The Person and the Work in Question," *Durham University Journal* (June 1984), 261–75.

Sewell, Brocard. *Footnote to the Nineties: A Memoir of John Gray and André Raffalovich*. London: Cecil and Amelia Woolf, 1968.

_____. *In the Dorian Mode: A Life of John Gray, 1866–1934*. Padstow, Cornwall: Tabb House, 1983.

_____. *Two Friends: John Gray & André Raffalovich. Essays Biographical and Critical*. Aylesford, Kent: Saint Albert's Press, 1963.

Vernon, Peter J. "The Letters of John Gray." Ph.D. Dissertation, University of London, 1976.

Zaina, Alexandra. "The Prose Works of John Gray," in *Two Friends: John Gray & André Raffalovich. Essays Biographical and Critical*. Brocard Sewell, ed. Aylesford, Kent: Saint Albert's Press, 1963, 70–99.

Editorial Principles

AS AN EDITOR, I followed the principle that he who edits best, edits least. John Gray has his own quite idiosyncratic style, partly due to the fact that he was self-educated. In the earlier pieces, the grammar is not always secure (although sometimes it is merely awkward). In the later essays, he appears to have written as he would have talked, following the British habit of dropping articles when speaking informally. And one must add that unusual turns of phrase also reflect Gray's own natural perversity. He often consciously wrote against the grain, which entailed not only writing against ingrained assumptions but also against predictable phrasing. Taking all these factors into account, it seemed wiser to leave the occasional awkward construction strictly alone, as it acts as a kind of signature to a prose that is, at its best, lucid and terse. On the other hand, Gray was not always well served by his printers; obvious misprints have silently been corrected.

A greater difficulty arises in Gray's use of phrases (later, of entire conversations) in languages other than English. Occasionally he would italicize these; usually, however, he would not. The only apparent principle he followed was one of personal emphasis: if he wanted to call attention to the foreign quality of the phrase, it would be italicized. Otherwise, Latin tags and French phrases are thrown in willy-nilly, to take their place with the English as part of everyday speech—everyday, that is, to the educated elite to whom it was addressed. Gray's distinctive handling of foreign words says much about what he expected from his readers. And, if his mandarin style is not to everyone's taste, it would nevertheless be a drastic change of Gray's style to italicize all passages not in English. Those who do not feel at home in this macaronic universe should consult the notes to the prose, where full translations are provided. I hope they will add to the enjoyment of a prose that has been said to have the "dryness of a patrician [if not native] wine."

"Les Goncourt"

The Dial, 1 (1889), 9–13.

Gray's first publication appeared in the inaugural edition of The Dial, a journal which was to set new standards in England for typography and format. Its editors, Charles Ricketts and Charles Shannon, were engravers and art collectors. Ricketts, whose mother was French, was particularly knowledgeable about the new artistic and literary movements in France and, as such, was almost certainly the one to persuade Gray (described during this period as one of his "disciples") to write about two of its notable revolutionaries, the Goncourt brothers.

Gray assumes that his reader is familiar with the reputation of Edmond (1822–1896) and Jules (1830–1870) de Goncourt as inventors of the roman documentaire. Their novels documented a vast range of social milieux, from the world of journalism in Charles Demailly to the artist world of Manette Salomon (1867), from the hospital ward in Soeur Philomène (1861) to the bourgeois drawing-room in Renée Mauperin (1864). By imitating the methods exemplified in their Germinie Lacerteux (1864), the first realistic novel of French working-class life, the novelist Emile Zola earned a fortune and a world-wide reputation as the leader of the naturalist movement in French literature.

Although their frank documentation of different social classes pointed the way to the modern novel, the Goncourts's reputation was seriously compromised by their style. Notoriously mannered, its tortured syntax and countless neologisms alienated their public. "Never," as Gray remarks, "was great work more destitute of charm for the vulgar." Gray attributes the style to their temperament, to the necessary neuroses of the artist, who is "always an abnormal creature, a being with an over-developed brain, or diseased nerves." This observation may have been prompted by the publication, from March 1887 onward, of the Goncourt Journals (volume 3 appeared in the spring of 1888). It is worth noting that,

in a review essay (also of 1888) on "The Journal of the Brothers de Goncourt," Henry James takes the opposite stand, arguing that the revelation of the Goncourt brothers as "furious névrosés . . . has obtruded into our sense of their literary performance the disturbance of a revelation of personal character" (Essays in London and Elsewhere. London: J. R. Osgood, McIlvaine, 1893, p. 191).

In The Dial publication, the opening word is incorporated in a lavish design by Charles Ricketts of a woman studying herself in a mirror, which is reproduced on the opposite page.

Les Goncourt

WAS great work more destitute of charm for the vulgar than that of MM. Edmond and Jules de Goncourt. To the few, to artists in fact, their studies, aphorisms, epithets, are exquisite beyond praise; but by no effort can they prevail upon the applauding public to perform its proper functions. For the multitude they are far too mature. Working upon a formula still young, broad work was necessary in order to be generally appreciated. If Zola found it so great a task to force his way, shouting through the main thoroughfares in the language of the trottoir; smiting with heavy fists the heads insensible to any other influence, where shall MM. de Goncourt be found? With every quality so fresh, so rare, words so daintily chosen and attuned, small wonder they make mediocrity nervous and irascible. It takes the mass of people whole decades to get rid of habitudes once thoroughly acquired; and we must not forget that while readers of the *XIXth Century*,[1] frequenters of artistic salons, and those who go to supper with leading men of science, are in the year 1889, people on the outer edges of culture circles are beginning to recommend

George Eliot to their young friends, talking about Millet[2] in subdued voices, and quoting the Duke of Argyll[3] on the theory of evolution.

But though their work is appreciated, however warmly, by comparatively few only, its indirect influence can already be widely traced. It has shown the present generation of realists most unmistakably that there is no salvation in a formula. Work great in itself is helped by being erected upon a sound scientific basis; it has better chances of being understood if it rests upon a foundation consistent with the spirit of its time; but poor, it gains nothing from the advantage in question.

The artist is always an abnormal creature, a being with an overdeveloped brain, or diseased nerves, as some express it. As specially distinguished from the literary grocer, he cannot choose but give his own personality in his work. His greatness is in the insight that discovers new motives, and in the earnestness with which he carries them out. It is quite the rule that the really great only gain their place after fierce struggling; for apart from the actual work, they have to create a taste for it, a task generally tedious in proportion to its worth.

If the Goncourts not only announce, but also give effect to, their intention to war with conventionality, no exception will be made in their case, that those whose united tastes and opinions makes [for] conventionality should be defeated at the challenge only—on the contrary.

Documentary fiction is now accepted. The real thing, and variously pretentious imitations of it, are even fashionable. The realist, as we sometimes call him, is sent out to tell us what he sees and hears and feels, but the commission includes authority to select at his discretion. Now the peculiar temperament of the Goncourt personality, its passion for the choice, the rare, makes it produce results too strange. Though they believed strongly in the far superior value of the actually seen and felt, their particular predilections sometimes came in to defeat the immediate purpose, when they reproduced

what they, and but a very few similar temperaments, feel and see. I do not mean to say that they exaggerate. Where there is unusual insistence over trivialities, it is merely nature seen by two exceptional organisms of peculiarly rare culture. What they give us is, as a rule, intelligible to any sentient being, which is enough; for writings all of nerve are not for readers made all of gristle.

When we know their aims, how could we remain apathetic towards their work? Understood that the description of some actual scene is preferable to that of one purely imaginary or faintly remembered; agreed that a study of some individual dustman has a higher artistic value than a character composed of the second-hand sentiments of a dozen Christian gentlemen, they carry the superior aim in each case a little farther than it has been carried before. Developing in a direction different from that Zola and Balzac have taken, they do not care so much to include a great variety of types as to exhaustively study a few. So closely is the specimen examined, that the description rendered seems fanciful to the superficial. And for figures so patiently observed, so exquisitely drawn, their artistic minds demand equally perfect environments.

How they manage their still life! The whole art with which they arranged backgrounds and accessories was largely their own invention. True, the revolt against conventional artistic surroundings was already begun elsewhere. Some of the best English art, for instance (the Pre-Raphaelite work affords a notable example), had been strongly characterised by its freedom from the trammels of tradition. At the present moment, alas! the movement seems to have died down in our midst, and when it returns it will be through France. In moments of supreme emotion, a trivial or irrelevant fact, a strange shape, an unexpected sound, have a value the artist cannot afford to neglect. If the Goncourts were not the first to discover this principle, at all events no one hitherto has so thoroughly understood and consciously applied it as they.

By the judicious use of apparently accidental surroundings, and, secondarily, of epithets quite fit, touching the very essence of the thing described, they sought to retain about an incident precisely those details the absence of which usually distinguishes a description from the recollection of an event. And with what success! Certain of their scenes seem to throb with the very emotion proper to them; that, for instance, where Germinie sits immobile in her room watching the hands of the dispassionate cou-cou, so deliberate in its utterance tonight. Quite a detail in Chérie; the mother is tending the last hours of her soldier husband in some fetid shed, where, from beneath blankets thrown over corpses, rats dart with bloody whiskers. All war in one swift phrase.

The Goncourts saw clearly how poverty-stricken was the contemporary novel; and their dream was, no doubt, that the obvious superiority of their work would, as soon as it appeared, hurry them to a high seat of honour. Their reception by the public was at first almost favourable; early historical works are praised in a guarded way. Their first novel, published by an ill-chance on the morning of the Coup d'Etat,[4] was entirely overlooked. Then frank hostility met every succeeding volume, until "Manette Salomon," when the sudden change of attitude on the part of the critics might very well have persuaded them that patient persistence had overcome their opponents, and that at last they had arrived. But if they suffered the illusion, how brief it was! At the theatre their experience was very similar. To get "Henriette Maréchal" requested for the Français[5] looked like unmixed appreciation of their talents; but, the great day of its production arrived, the gallery is filled with shrieking students, assembled by circular to hoot the play before the rising of the curtain; it being alleged that it is only put on through Imperial patronage. The brilliancy, the originality of the first act (it is not worth while adding, the grace of the arrangement, the swiftness of the dialogue) fail to shame the supporters of the cruel conspiracy, who patiently

yell until the piece is withdrawn. Immediately afterwards the printed play sells phenomenally.

One sees very clearly the reason of their being hissed one day and bought the next, congratulated in the salons, and spit at in the journals. The fact is, the more enlightened of the critics could not with any conscience at once defer to the popular opinion; and perhaps the herd at first thought that the originality of the Goncourts was of that specious kind with which the lover of the commonplace likes to be tickled occasionally. But soon, when their seriousness is doubted by no one, when the vulgar find that these authors absolutely refuse to flatter and soothe, the vote of the majority takes effect. No; this sort of thing cannot be tolerated a moment! Life is stern enough as it is; we want the sugary, the ideal, in our scanty leisure. Why these descriptions, so accurate, so irresistible? Who wants to be wrung with another's agony? Unpleasant! Nauseating!

And what shall we, we English, say? we the chosen? we who understand so well that a book, to be good, must recount a series of good actions? we who like the shadow thrown across the hero's path only for the pleasure of seeing it swept away again? who feel impatient if the wedding is delayed? Germinie Lacerteux stayed out late at night? stole from her mistress? Manette Salomon was not married to Coriolis? Put it away! put it away! Dear me! if Freddy should get hold of it! Shocking blemishes, happily so soon discovered. Let us beware of the glittering poison.

To more intelligent people in England they give the same impression as, now, to the corresponding class in France; except perhaps that the English aversion to the exotic is stronger than the French. The concentration, the devotion to the subject, that enables the Goncourts to impart to the reader's nerves the smart of the pain they describe, is condemned, because it is "unpleasant," with more persistence here than there. For the French can certainly claim a higher average artistic intelligence than we, in that at least some

appreciable proportion of them understand the phrase "art for art's sake."

Beyond their mere literary achievements, we owe them much. It was they who discovered the youthfulness in the art of the last century; a truth yet to reach us.

Then theirs was the appreciative discovery of the art of Japan, which has so improved the best modern art; has helped us out of our artificial horizons, the conceited tameness of our landscape; has shown us the surprise, the instantaneousness, of action; taught us the great value of blank space, and what a large motive the surface itself can be in the decoration of material.

The example is an unique one, of literary men influencing the manner of seeing, not thinking, of contemporary painters. As opposed to it, see how the German literature has dragged the whole German school into their ponderous pictorial tracts and sermons. It is true they had an advantage in the possession of no ordinary graphic skill; but compared with their contemporaries, the impartiality of their eyes is simply marvellous. The artistic penetration displayed in "Manette Salomon" astonishes us in this year of grace 1889; and it must be remembered that when it was written the mass of French art seemed devoted to a pleasant "officialism," exhausted with the previous efforts of romanticism, while the tenets of the school of Barbizon[6] had drifted into a mannerism for Goupil.[7]

Rising from realism merely, they seem at some moment to have definitely chosen for their task the study of woman. If we know them at all intimately, we can imagine how the rarity of the undertaking (as they undertook it), and the greater complexity of the feminine nature, would have allured those who said, "Where woman is a masterpiece she is the greatest objêt d'art." To the time of Jules' death they had drawn Soeur Philomèle, Renée Mauperin, Germinie, Manette, Madame Gervaisais. Years afterwards, when Edmond again writes, it seems as if he is only impelled by a desire to make a plunge

while any force remains in him, to complete a series of portraits planned long since; for he gives us La Faustin, La Fille Élisa, Chérie.[8]

Besides their admirable studies of historic women, which cannot here be noticed, what a gallery their fiction affords! The devoted hospital nurse; the robust Renée; Germinie, a triumph of psychological analysis; the terrible Jewess; Madame Gervaisais, whose femininity is for a time obscured in learned pursuits, but afterwards asserts itself in Rome, the seat of learning and art, but also of the Christian religion; the superb list finishing with the most audaciously rare (I do not mean the best) of all in its ambitiousness, the short life of the young mondaine, granddaughter of Napoleon III's War Minister, Chérie.

"The Great Worm"

The Dial, 1 (1889), 14–18.

In this story Gray pays tribute to Oscar Wilde, whose book of fairy stories, The Happy Prince and Other Tales, was published in May 1888. The "Worm" is, of course, a dragon, and the style of Gray's story plays whimsically with the medieval/modern vogue of the Pre-Raphaelites. Ultimately its gentle mockery extends even to the writer himself, whom the Epilogue reveals to be the dreamer of the tale. Gray was to use the dream-vision again in one of his successful Silverpoints poems, "Mishka," and, at the end of his life, in the curious fantasy of Park.

The story opens with a lithograph by Ricketts illustrating the meeting of the white girl and the Worm and closes with an etching, also by Ricketts, of the white lady asleep (which is reproduced on the opposite page). Ricketts was also responsible for the typography, and I have tried to reproduce its main features, most notably in the exclusion of quotation marks and the use of the dash to indicate a different speaker: a device Gray was to deploy later in "Dialogue" (which is reprinted below.)

The Great Worm

UNAFFECTED beast that he was, the great worm lived in quite the sort of place where one would have gone to look for him, somewhere in the belly of one of those mountain ranges in Central Asia, with a name as ragged as its silhouette. When taking exercise, his manner was to climb, rather than walk, along the ground, in undisguised worm fashion, when to a distant observer it seemed that not only was his skin loose from his muscles, but that his four short crooked legs and his two little wings were stuck about his body quite promiscuously. He was perfectly satisfied with his natural colours—white and gold—nor did the vain ambition to be painted green like other worms even so much as enter his head. He did not snort lightning, and none but honeyed words ever left his gentle lips.

He came into the city one day, choosing his steps most carefully, so as not to derange public edifices, and threading himself through triumphal arches with marvellous dexterity. He inquired his way to the palace; and, when he reached it, he found, as will readily be believed, that the entrance was too small to admit him. Not being pressed for time, he stretched himself out the full length of the terrace, with a part of his tail hanging over the battlements.

Meanwhile, the traffic of the city had adroitly diverted itself into the suburbs.

When the worm had lain some time without any special manifestation, one of the doorkeepers of the palace, acting under orders

which he obeyed implicitly out of deference to the military spirit of his age, galloped up to his ear and asked, What does my lord require? The worm took no notice of the doorkeeper, but continued to smile because of the warmth of the sun's rays. What do you want here? the horseman repeated in his other ear. He replied, without impatience, that he had called to see the prince, but as the doorway was not large enough for him to enter, he was going home again presently when he had warmed himself.

Whereupon, the horseman wheeled about and trotted into the palace, his lance, twenty feet long, quivering erect in the air.

Soon there was great din of brass and wailing of reeds; piercing screams, which were words of command, rang within the wall, to which noise was added the clatter of many hoofs. This demonstration, intended to impress the worm, was misjudged, for it might have been performed on his chest without disturbing him. At a distance from which one could get a general view of the visitor, layers of carpets were thrown down and unrolled one upon another until a comfortable surface was attained. Sunshades were then arranged to throw a deep shade upon a black velvet cushion streaked with gold, on which the prince was deposited, after the Chamberlain, with customary politeness, had scattered a few priceless diamonds upon it. The worm cast an occasional glance on these preparations from over his eyebrows, for he was lying on his back with the crown of his head towards them.

—Speak, worm! shouted an officer, thou gold worm!

—He isn't gold, remarked a philosopher.

—I come, he answered, my lord, to enlist in your royal armies.

—Yes, he is, only he's out of repair.

—Ah! Ha! is that so, you long animal, said the distinguished prince, as his vizier held his lorgnon in position. Ha! let me see—yes! he went on, as he was raised and supported over to the recruit. The worm still remained lying on his back, for he had an exceedingly

long tongue, which enabled him to kiss the royal hand without altering position. The regulation suit of armour and supply of weapons for a private of the militia had meanwhile been brought; this blunder greatly incensed the prince, who had mentally appointed the worm commander-in-chief. In accordance with this decision he directed the supply of a silk-lined suit of armour, tested weapons, and a body of attendants to look after them. When the senior officers of the staff heard this order, their hair curled behind where their master could not observe it.

—Stay, though; would you prefer a horse or a camel, general? The worm hesitated to reply, for apart from the perplexity of the question, two rival recruiting sergeants on the far side of him were trying to elicit his age and whether he was married. Seeing his embarrassment, the prince explained that a horse wore the plume above his head, while a camel wore it under his chin. Of course, the worm at once decided to have the former.

—Cough, said the surgeon-major.

—Ugh! Ugh!

—Ever had . . . .

—The medical officer, interrupted a philosopher, ought to know that the general could not have attained his present rank . . . .

—Ugh! Ugh!

—Ever had measles?

—Ugh! Ugh!

. . . . if he had not already answered these questions satisfactorily.

—Will the philosopher mind his own business?

—Is the carpenter in attendance? asked the prince, while the vizier obtruded the lorgnon for his master to scan the court.

—Ugh! Ugh! The horse was now led up, its shiny coat purple in the sun. The worm admired the strings of beads with which it was decorated, and the bridle straps crusted with gold. But oh, the plume!

That was the best of all! So pleased indeed was he with it, that he begged one for his own wear.

—No, he ain't, whispered a philosopher.

—No, he isn't, I suppose you mean, answered the surgeon-major, in the tone of voice habitual to him when he thought of the gallows.

The medical officer was examining his ankle with a vexed countenance, as a scribe wrote out for the worm a coupon for the annual Grand-cross lottery by way of a quarter's salary in advance. This would have ended the formalities, had not the court poet found an opportunity to commence reciting the worm's military antecedents.

—Is that that man again? asked the prince; I abolish the office. The laureate ceased.

At this time, most of the tribes on the outskirts of the principality had already forgotten their allegiance, or but faintly remembered it. The prince thought, therefore, that he would send his new general marching round his dominions with an expedition, to freshen the memories of these subjects.

The worms found that he had scarcely to show himself to the first rebel he came across. The news of his march spread like overflowing water.

—An army of worm, said the panting messenger, is approaching!

—What colour?

—White, I think, with pink banners. And the news fled past, leaving the municipality to hurry home and prepare with all haste flattering memorials and presentation caskets of odious workmanship.

Then, when he arrived, a few days afterwards, the worm would find a head citizen shivering at the extremity of a strip of red carpet leading from the city gate beckoning to others within the walls, to come out and support him.

Thus the army left everywhere peace and order with its hoof-

prints, daily growing deeper with the weight of presents the dromedaries had to bear.

—What is the name of the green city yonder? was a question that ran round the camp one morning. No one could tell. In fact, it had scarcely been sighted when white curtains dropped before it and obscured it from view. As the day advanced, the curtains were found to be composed of graceful white beings, for the vanguard saw them swing in the air, stand upright, stretching their arms and craning their necks to the sky, then sink again in repose. Where the white host parted its ranks, glimpses were caught of the superb details of the city, its columns of silver, domes of emerald, and minarets.

At length, when these white folk rose up and departed in sheets, like morning mist, wont as he was to see living things fly at his approach, their disappearance caused the worm no surprise. He still preserved his steady oscillations, regular as the wheeze and thud of a steamer's engines, and so manipulated that his train could follow him without difficulty.

The soldiers thought to have reached their destination in a few hours; but at noon, when they threw themselves down on the ground for a halt, overcome with the fierce heat, the splendid city had faded to a milky blue, so like the colour of the sky that its contour could scarcely be traced.

The weary animals and men trudged on, scarcely hoping to reach the city that day, always watching the changing blue. It is a city of gold, said some. Its minarets are topped with amber. No, it is all of amber. But at evening no one doubted any longer; all saw plainly that the city was upheld by silver columns, trunks of the birch; its battlements, daring minarets in the shape of palms, towers like the cypress, domes like masses of foliage, golden all in the setting sun. Within, its streets were streams, and lilies grew along the roadside.

But, curious to say, not a soul was to be seen about. The worm began to fear he had pushed his conquering way too far; and that at

last he was before a city whose inhabitants were not even interested in worms, far less afraid of them.

However, he drew his army up in line and banged all his cymbals, at which clouds of birds arose, screeching as they crossed and circled. Presently he saw come gliding out from the colonnade, a figure of silent whiteness. She passed over the rippled gold around the city, smoothly as her chariot upon the highways of the city. Her body had the undulations of a pod, ripe swollen to bursting; her breasts were like mounds under moonlit snow. Her hair, gold as corn at noon, was prodigal as a waterfall; and her eyes were like pansies. Her tiara, wrought of blue lichens and down of the night-moth, was crowned with dainty fronds. Straight she came to the general, gliding ever, gave him the flower she bore in her hands; then turned about and passed away as she had appeared. The worm stuck the lily in one of the scales upon his breast, and briefly gave order for a camp to be pitched.

Strange sounds that night made the frightened soldiers start from sleep, and the pale sentinels saw their leader writhing round and round the city, ploughing deep furrows as he went; and heard him moaning in the cold moonlight—Why am I a worm?

Ah! it was too horrible; he remembered that he had been human.

Next day the march was resumed, but not many mornings from his departure from the city of the white child, the worm sank down, a corpse. And the lily upon his breast?—it had taken root there; and beads of his heart's blood smiled on every petal.

EPILOGUE.

A poet lay in a white garden of lilies, shaping the images of his fancy, as the river ran through his trailing hair.

But in his garden a long worm shook himself after sleep; forgotten

his face like a pearl, his beautiful eyes like a snake's, his breathing hair—all. He had complete reminiscences of a worm, and sought the deserts and ravines the dragon loves.

"The Person in Question"

(1892?)

Left in typescript at Gray's death among the papers bequeathed to the Dominican Chaplaincy, Edinburgh, the location of the original is now unknown. It was first printed as The Person in Question (Buenos Aires: Colombo, 1958), with a note by Patricio Gannon, and later reprinted as "The Person in Question," Antigonish Review, 1 (1971), 67–75; and "Appendix I: The Person in Question," In the Dorian Mode: A Life of John Gray, 1866–1934 (Padstow, Cornwall: Tabb House, 1983), pp. 214–22.

A crucial piece for the interpretation of Gray's life and work, "The Person in Question" was probably written during the summer and autumn of 1892, when Gray broke off his friendship with Wilde. Subsequently, in November, Gray suffered a dramatic collapse, both physical and psychic. This story explicitly offers a psychological analysis of the "experience," which is treated as a crisis of identity so acute it threatens madness. (For a detailed discussion of the dating, see Jerusha Hull McCormack, John Gray: Poet, Dandy, & Priest, p. 275, n.127.)

Although the story echoes themes from The Picture of Dorian Gray, it would be hard to chose a close model from the many popular doppelgänger stories of the later nineteenth century. Alexandra Zaina mentions a near parallel in the poem by Alfred de Musset, Nuit de Décembre (p. 82). The tale also has an unnerving resemblance to one told by Oscar Wilde. Pointing across the Café Royal (the actual setting of opening scene of the story) to another diner, Wilde remarked: "That is Frederick Sandys," adding sorrowfully that he had been dead many years (McCormack, John Gray, p. 98). It is worth noting that Gray frequently met Wilde in the Café Royal, the walls of which are hung with large opposing mirrors—perhaps prompting his "reflections" on doubling and identity.

The Person in Question

S well as I remember, the first time I saw—or to be quite accurate, the first time I observed—the person in question must have been in the last days of last August twelvemonth; or it may have been at the beginning of September. I am not one of the fortunate who go out of London at the end of the season,[1] my holiday falling about October. I was lunching at the Café Royal. Once this had been my regular custom, but on this day I went there simply because I knew it was the only place where I could eat at all. I found how right my judgment had been—I remember being struck by it at the time—for even there I could find nothing to excite my fainting appetite. Ah, I was miserable that day. It was so hot, so hot, and I know not what fevers were raging in London. Miserable. I thought at first I would take something I could not afford. Then the smell of the dish I imagined passed in my brain and it was not to be thought of. I would chance it, and take "the lunch" with a bock. Absurd, I could not have touched it; I must pull myself together and be sensible. Everyone must have suffered these agonies; I suppose it is, everyone is not so candid as I am. It is all very well to be eccentric, especially in your food, it has its use and pleasure; but this is compensated by the fact that a whim has only life for one occasion. I once had a beautiful dinner; it cost ten and a penny:[2] a pint of claret and a piece of bread, un bout bien cuit.[3] Afterwards I tried to repeat this; a stupid attempt, had it not been for a stroke of genius I had, to add to it some

saucisson de Lyon, a Norwegian sardine, some tong[4]—every hors-d'oeuvre the restaurant held. Ah! that was a meal for an artist.

On this occasion I was not quite the hero of the bread and wine. I called Bismarck;[5] again, and again. He is less expansive than kindly. I had bored him by my indecision, and it was long before he came to my bidding. I did not reproach him with his indifference, that I had done many times too often already, but went straight into committee with him. Together we worked out: a sardine, cold roast beef, very underdone, to be followed by some vegetable marrow;[6] and a small bottle of Niersteiner with soda-water.

"Garçon!" said, rather murmured, a soft voice near me. It struck me strangely, it might have been my own. I believe I am singular in hearing the timbre of my own voice, so I was able to see the resemblance. A clumsy or ignorant person might have thought the voice was of a drunken man, or one half asleep. I understood its pitch only too well; so well that I listened for the repetition of the word, which came after the lapse of time I had allowed for it, loud, harsh, and unhesitating in key, as I had mentally predicted it. So that I looked whence it came. I knew the person knew I looked at him, though he seemed not to notice; but I stared steadily. I am not particular on this point; I know when I am at liberty to stare, not to mention the fact that people stare at me enough, people, too, who know better.

He was a man of about my own proportions; he might even once have been like me in face—for he was at least twenty five years older than myself, and bearded straggingly; so that any existing likeness between us was well obscured.

"Pass me the Handelsblad," he said to the waiter who bent towards him, pointing with a stiff arm and drooping hand, "and some ice and some butter. Bring me my lunch. . . . It's that Dutch paper I want," he continued, the waiter seeming stupid, still pointing with his wrist to the pile of newspapers.

My first emotion was fear, as these words followed one another

from his lips. Then I gave myself up to observe this so complete illusion; for such I supposed it to be. The coincidences offered me nothing new, unfortunately—in principle. I had for months been accustomed to see my own face suddenly, unexpectedly, younger and better looking, or quite old, looking into my own and very close to me, healthy or haggard, puffed and spotted, or pure and transparent like an angel's.

Coincidences can only reach a certain point within safe and normal limits. There was about this person, not one or two points, but, so far as my close observation could detect, complete resemblance to myself, in distinctive gesture and turn of phrase. I could even allow these and neglect the coincidence, though I should find it hard to do so, knowing so much as I do about my own disease. But why should an obvious Englishman, in the Café Royal, want a Dutch newspaper, and the Handelsblad of all? It was my own very case. I happen to know Dutch,[7] my chance accomplishment is a rare one, and the Handelsblad happens to be interesting to me for the remotest of reasons. I went so far, in my surprise and critical interest as to doubt the actual existence of that copy of the Dutch paper, and I am not sure I was wrong; still, this is negligible.

Fear passed panic in a very short time, and became dull pain, (yet I could not be further surprised) when I saw that my neighbour was eating the things I ate and drinking Niersteiner and *soda*-water—a taste my own if any is. I watched him in simple conscientiousness, for I could have seen him out of the back of my head. There he sat, fully materialised, for were not a waiter and a boy running hither and thither for him? One person coming in spoke to him and shook hands with him. Yet, though his voice, manner and sequence of acts were my own, his movements did not follow mine seriatim.[8] I took trouble and arranged tests to be sure of this.

Why did I not seek an excuse to speak to him, to touch him? I put myself a possible, absurd question, for the mere sake of laughing at

it. No, and no; I knew a little more, even then, than to have done such a thing. Seriously, was it a warning? or what was it—this acute phenomenon? I must be excessively ill, was all I could resolve; and, panic-struck, I was not altogether displeased. I left the Café and did not see the person in question for months.

Then it was one Saturday night, at a crush party,[9] at Lady N ....'s. I was thoroughly surprised to see him, for I had come to a very precise conclusion as to his appearance. The day following my first experience I had looked for him at the same hour, but I did not see him, and, singular thing, all the hallucinations from which I had suffered, and suffered daily, suddenly ceased from that time. I say singular, though my doctor said this was to be expected when I told him of my adventure; my own knowledge lead me to disagree with my doctor.

Well, there he was, looking very much as he had looked before, perhaps a little younger and smarter in his evening dress, for he was scrupulously clad. I noticed his gloves, which were clean and well fitting, made of suede, of which I am so fond. I did not see him look once towards me, though he had the air of being keenly aware of my presence. Why bandy words? I *know* and *knew* this was so. Also our resemblance was not less. The back of his head recalled vividly to me the appearance of my own, and he had a comic manner of mine on such occasions—it was troubling me at that very moment—which made me laugh: a half-controlled mania I have to put my hands in my pockets.

I was feeling so well that evening, so indifferent to hallucinations—one gets used to them as to anything else: I know a man who now, when he sees a certain woman in a large beaver hat, simply says "Chestnuts" to a supposed tormenting agent—that I went boldly to Lady N. at the top of the stairs; and pointing out the person with every precaution against mistake, asked her his name. She looked carefully, and without hesitation told me. I thanked her for the

odd-sounding sequence of syllables, resolving to puzzle out the name from the memory of them. But in a moment they were quite gone; I no longer had an idea if it was an English name or a foreign, or if part of it was a title. Still, what material I had was somewhere in my brain, and I counted on recovering it some time. One thing I thought important. I was certain Lady N. had seen the person I pointed out, and I felt sure the sounds she had spoken as his name, really made a name. I resolved to put the whole subject out of my mind, to adopt the sanguine hypothesis that the person in question was a real, ordinary man; that when I had first seen him, a certain amount of unhappy coincidences had engendered illusion, by which I recognised much more than there was. I am thoroughly sincere as a student of psychiatry.

I left the party. I was not afraid, but I thought it wiser not to run any more risks so far as this person was concerned, so I walked down to my club, was quiet, ate a quiet supper and left quietly. I came down in the lift—I dislike stairs extremely. While the boy was holding on my coat for me, looking aslant across the vestibule, whom should I see talking to the door-keeper but the person in question? Little by little I built up my determination in my mind, and had half passed the cupola to question the man, when suddenly I pulled up, with difficulty controlling my start of fear, in terror of the doubt which laid hold upon me. How it held me then, dragging me this way and that, goading me to fever.

On Sunday morning I was singularly well. I had slept soundly, the dreamless sleep of the happy dead; dreamless for me at least. Subjects of my complaint enjoy a great many mitigations. Giving to each shock we have the importance it seems to claim, it looks as though a tithe of our experiences would kill us in a very short time. Yet often a perfectly horrible crisis vouchsafes a long sweet sleep of a little child. The fact being that outward symptoms mean nothing, beyond their use to come at the disease itself, the shy, silent thing, lurking

and working ceaselessly night and day, through sleep and waking, fair and foul, health and weariness, always just the same.

I pushed on steadily, dressing and breakfasting, to catch my train: I had to go to Brighton. I thought closely of over-night, neither laughing nor shuddering; nor did I hasten to form a conclusion. At length I summed up something in this wise (Remember I had a vastly greater number of considerations to bear in mind than I have even indicated): I was certainly very much better than a few months ago; probably better than ever in my life before; incontestably. A person whose appearance is undoubtedly interesting to me is constantly in my way. This person is to be classed in one of several categories; in some near or remote sense *he is myself*. It wants time, observation and wary calm for me to discover in what sense he is myself. It may be, probably is, that my nerves, quickened and refined by disease, and unable to return to their first insensate condition, put me in a position to appreciate a phenomenon perhaps of the most ordinary description, which those who can detect it do not think themselves bound to disclose to those who cannot.

I had roughly reached this conclusion by the time I had taken my seat in the smoking compartment of the Pullman Car for Brighton. I so well possessed myself that I was quite prepared to see the person in question enter the carriage, and occupy the one vacant seat. We started without him. I felt sure he was not in the train, but for whim's sake I looked into the non-smoking part of the carriage. Of course he was not to be seen. I arrived at the Metropole,[10] and there in the hall he lay, asleep in a great arm-chair, before the fire. I was surprised, later in the day, to remember having felt compassion for him, sleeping there in the morning time. I had accepted him, for whatever he might be.

Well that I had, and so easily. For through the months of winter, dine where I would he was at a table near; in obscure Italian restaurants, at supper in fashionable and fraudulent places. He often

had friends with him, a strange assortment too. I used to laugh sometimes, at the expense of the people with whom I supped or went to the theatre. "There sit," I would think, looking at the other table, or in the opposite box, "themselves, or their parts or doubles (whatever they are) and *they don't know*." I would try to *pair* the actual and phenomenal. Once too, I mention it inconsequently, but I think it interesting, I had a mind to go to a very outlandish place; a friend had offered to take me to a real Jewish restaurant in Whitechapel;[11] longing to go, I yet refused, thinking "I can go myself well enough, but *he* can't," and often afterwards I considered *his* comfort when it was a question of some very minor music hall.

Then came the season. The park, Hurlingham, the Opera,[12] he never failed. The last I thought strangest, if strangeness in such a case is susceptible of degree; my visits to the Opera rest mainly on chance; I am either invited, or when I buy my stall tastes very complicated guide my choice of a night. But, as I say, he never failed when I was there. I never but that once, at Lady N ....'s, saw him in a private house.

The end of July came, fierce and wearingly dull; with it my after-season wretchedness and jealously. The ordinary was bad, when I began to see the person in question in the streets. I can never describe the despair which came upon me at this development. I worried to *propitiate* him, passing miserable evenings in places I loathed, to give him his chance to haunt my life peaceably. I liked seeing him at last, I confess, but not in the streets. "If only I did not see him in the streets!" That was my daily prayer and agony. I always found myself pursuing him a few yards before me. It was too bad. One day I found courage; I walked after him, almost chasing him. He walked quicker, so did I, till I came close behind him. Then, urging all my strength, as though I forced some muscle in my brain to clang the words, I *thought*, slowly and heavily. If only I did not see you in the streets, if only I did not see you in the streets. He turned

into a mean tobacco shop, and I never saw him under the like conditions again.

I lived through August painfully; each day seemed heavier than the last. I began to be very ill; my appetite was almost gone. You may scarcely believe that at this point I found courage and consolation in the neighbourhood of the person in question. It is hard in August to find things to eat—in restaurants. So that it came to me like an inspiration when I had an idea for a dinner; for while only one invented, two enjoyed. He was most punctual at all times to eat exactly what I ate.

Almost all through the season, I should mention, certainly all through June and July, I had seen him in practically every public place I went to, though often for not long at a time. Latterly he had frequently missed and I saw him more and more seldom until it was only once a day. On the third of September I woke very tired in the morning. I could neither eat nor speak; scarcely could I walk. All I knew was a craving for stimulants; but, save for occasional debauches of cigarettes, I am abstemious in their use. I looked for him at lunch; in fact, before ordering, I waited a little for his arrival. He did not come at all. During the afternoon I made up my mind that the moment I had seen him I would go straight away to bed. What a blessing I had so far kept him out of my dreams, out of my rooms! I dared not think of the possibility of seeing him sitting in my own place one night when I lighted the candles.

I thought out the matter carefully, and went at length to a new restaurant, where chef and appointments were as good as anywhere in London. I placed myself where, by aid of the mirrors on the walls, I commanded a view of the door. He did not come; all through my dinner I watched every swing of the door in vain. As I took my coffee I was bored more than I could bear. I had counted so dearly on a long night's sleep; and to be cheated of my hope in that way! However, there was no use in sulking, I must go somewhere—but

where? I could think of no place. Not half-a-dozen theatres were open; and a musichall—I could not. I went to the Exhibition.[13]

Anyone, knowing why I was there, might have been pardoned for laughing at me. It was interesting, this quest, especially as I was certain to find him in the end. After a time I gave myself a rest; I went upon the switchback.[14] I will not dwell upon the joy this simple joy is for me. Ah! there he was. I had a moment's awkward feeling, I don't know why—you know, people go on the switchback in couples as a rule—but somehow I shrank from the possibility of sitting beside him. Quite unconcerned, he took a place on the back bench, deferring to me, indulging me and yet not seeming to do so. I sat on the second bench by myself. "I pity," I thought, "the man who sits beside him, if he knew what I know." A sudden waft across the still dusty air, of foin coupé,[15] made me turn my head with revulsion and hate. A strange woman sat beside him! You may guess I soon looked away again; only thankful I was to windward of the hated odour. A natural, rational woman riding by herself on the switchback! Unheard of! I saw that this hateful accident, *that* man and such a woman, shadow, (what you like) beside him, was so full of possibilities that I *dared* not to dwell upon it. The car rushed away; the pleasure was such that it almost enabled me to break my unhappy turn of thought; though I had flatly refused to harbour the thought. I would the car could have gone with ten fold speed; for I felt it was carrying me away from them, though surely they were always as near to me. I did not even take my return flight. I preferred blundering over a partition to escape, pretending to the angry attendants that I had never been on the switchback before and was afraid.

I have never seen him since. Days and evenings and nights I passed, haggard, looking for him. My senses grew painfully keen as I strained sight and hearing for a trace of him. I could not bear to be in a place where there was a door, and a possibility of his entering behind me. I would even snuffle at times, in my despair, for a waft of that dreadful scent, that foin coupé. And wherever I was my poor skin, with a false

sense it should never have had, shuddered and queried for a symptom of *his* neighbourhood. Hysteria soon set in, as from hour to hour I had this unappeased craving for what had once been so unpleasant to me. Through the nights I tossed in my bed, waking up in a sweat after a short hour's sleep, repeating over and over to myself in an agony: "What shall I do? What shall I do?"

What shall I do, indeed? That is the tragedy of my life now: what shall I do? I am so broken in my health that I have every cause for concern. For weeks, feeling myself drooping, and in the violent conviction that a sight of him would calm me, I roved from place to place, to every spot where I had ever seen him. Ten disappointments a day had not the slightest effect upon me to deter me. And all, all in vain. At whatever cost I must find him, or know why I ever saw him, who he was, something about him. Call it mania; in the vulgar sense of the word it is, candidly, mania. And here comes a circumstance I must mention, for completeness, in spite of the regret it wakes in me. Infatuated wretch that I was to think that I could walk alone into the possession of rare knowledge and experience; worse, that I should have been jealous of my fortune. As a matter of fact there is one person to whom I could turn, one person who could tell me what I would know, who could tell me something at all events. But it is too late in the day, how can I go to him now? One person knows, I am sure he knows. But I know very well what he would say if I went to him. However, it is now entirely out of the question to seek his aid; he would never forgive my treachery in keeping my secret. I don't know what will happen. This is a fair statement of my "experience". I hope you will think I have fulfilled my promise.

"The Modern Actor"

The Albemarle: A Monthly Review, 2, no. 1 (July 1892), 20–24.

Reprinted as an appendix to Brocard Sewell's Footnote to the Nineties: A Memoir of John Gray and André Raffalovich, pp. 102–107.

"The Modern Actor" was originally a lecture given in conjunction with Oscar Wilde to the Playgoers' Club on 7 February 1892. In their separate lectures, both Gray and Wilde proposed a common theme, the radical redefinition of the actor: Wilde arguing that puppets would be preferable to actors; Gray that the true actor is none other than the vaudeville performer. Their obvious collaboration in this performance further fuelled rumours that Gray was, in fact, Wilde's protégé.

Such publicity obviously affected the reception of this lecture. But its impact should also be assessed in terms of the claim Gray was making for the artistes of the music hall. In Gray's day, the music hall was a venue for variety acts of all kinds, from the singers of popular (particularly Cockney) songs to clog dancing, acrobatic acts and even girls swimming in water tanks to the accompaniment of music. The ballet found an early home there when it was banned by the licencing laws which prescribed either music and dance or dramatic entertainments but prohibited any combination of the two. Although at the time of this lecture music halls were gradually becoming more respectable—some were even patronized by families—in general the audience was both classless and rowdy (as well as drunken) and they were regarded by young gentlemen as venues for picking up women. Gray's acclamation of these places as the "real" theatre was, therefore, both startling and offensive.

The Modern Actor

O spare any possibility of mystification, let me announce at once that by the modern actor I mean the Music Hall singer, the "artiste" many estimable and rightly inquisitive people have never seen, the "professional" thought of by some only with horror and disgust. Most, I suppose, look upon this person as more or less of a pariah. Those who so look upon him are perfectly right.

Every actor, and indeed, every artist, is properly an outcast and unclassed person; and in most right-minded times and countries he has been so treated, to the advantage and content of all. Instances will swarm at the bidding of a moment's reflection. Ostracism of the artist is very often called upon, and satisfactorily supplies explanations, even in these dilatory days. Among the great artists of the world Leonardo ranks with the foremost. I, for my part, would rather believe it fate than fortuity that his dust lies in exile beside the yellow Loire.[1] There is delicate quiet for what rests of his body in the little chapel of St. Hubert, which poises itself on the perilous rim of the rock of Amboise; and the lilies fade in the flagstones above him, and the house of kings of France crumbles around him. How unseemly to eyes of the Fifteenth Century would be the position of the fashionable portrait painter of this Nineteenth! And compare a portrait of Piero della Francesca[2] with a picture of any noble lady in any Academy.

Poets offer more convincing instances, having, in contrast with painters and sculptors, so little to do in the furnishing of life. Never

have these known peace, except when under the protection of queens and dukes. According to the legend Homer was a blind and pitiful beggar. When the finger was pointed at Dante Alighieri, and it was said: that is the man who has been in hell, those who said it were not far wrong.[3] François Villon was lashed and imprisoned and condemned to death.[4] He who bears today the tradition of Villon's song lies at this moment sick and hungry and naked. England has been rich in singers; the best of these have been done to death. Give her the advantage of one or two doubtful exceptions; all the rest she has driven to exile and suicide and misery.

Come now to the particular case of the actor. Whole classes of English society still look upon the theatre and all its belongings as closely linked to the devil's hell, and with a vehemence of loathing that never can be wholly accounted for. The feeling of which this distrust is the present manifestation does not date only from the Methodist revival, nor from the asceticism of the Seventeenth Century.[5] It is as old as the institution of the actor. One of the degradations to which, in old Roman law, the status of a properly moral citizen was liable, was the *levis nota*, the slight brand of disgrace with which he became marked who followed a low calling—or, as we say now, "profession". Of these the actor was typical; and however much he might be pampered for his antics and mimicry, he was marked, civically disgraced, disqualified, unprivileged, to a greater or lesser degree, at almost every incident of his life.

In the middle age the actor (leaving aside the monks with their mysteries and miracles) is a most accidental person, wandering about from place to place—a vagrant, with his little repertory, very humble, ready to mount and present in a few moments whatever his patrons would have of him. And until the great burst of English poetry, our splendid Jacobean period, the mummer who trailed his rags and masks about the country had a very strange bag of tricks indeed. For my part I see it very similar to some impossibly low and humble variety performance of the present day. You would have farce and

pantomime, half historical, clouded with myth and of uncertain origin; added to these, songs and dances, playing upon instruments of curious mould and use. Then there would be a learned animal, some feats of jugglery, and possibly, if the company were very complete, an exhibition of physical contortion. All whereby, the lord would be moderately well pleased; the ladies of his house would have had their little shudder at the sight of a man walking with his head the wrong way on, or eating lighted pitch, or swallowing knives; and the nice, grimy knights would have each his theory about the mechanism of a certain trick, and go about crooning to themselves the "Ta-ra-ra-boom-de-ay"[6] of the period. But the mummers? were they hurried up at once to a seat beside their hosts, and coaxed over a chosen goblet to give a select repetition of some minor trick? On the contrary, it never occurred to the patron that his clever visitors were in any way different from the pedlar. He gave them food and shelter in Christian and gentlemanly hospitality, and presents for the pleasure they had afforded him; but absolutely in the same spirit as he would have given them to the merest, humblest stranger at his castle.

At the end of the Sixteenth Century, by reason of the youth and strength of the song that burst simultaneously from the lips of a hundred poets, poetry became a sort of fashion, and for the first time in England the interest of the patron in the art of his protégé began to be really intelligent and intimate. Yet, though great was art, neither poet nor actor ever sought in that a pretext to become *respectable*, and the conditions of an aristocratic society would not have allowed them to realise their wish if they had.

The poet today draws his rents, if he has any, and sits down to reason out that he is really a hated and a hunted thing. He pictures his mother cursing and crying against God that among all women she has been chosen to be the disgust of her revolted husband and bear the hated child. But in spite of his mother's loathing the cursed thing grows up, under the tutelage of an angel, wild with the sunlight

that dances in his veins. And he talks with the winds and the clouds, and sings like birds among green branches, so that the spirit that guides him weeps to see him so gay. Those he would love look upon him with dread and hate, or, taking courage from his harmlessness, try which of them can first draw from him a sob of pain. They mix ashes and offal with his food and his drink, and pretend themselves defiled by touching the thing that has left his hand, or by treading in one of his footprints.

The notion is a charming one, exaggerated, as you have it here, into an artistic motive by so great a master as Charles Baudelaire;—for radically, mark, it is a true description—yet to the ordinary person, the worthy, practical man, to whom artistic motive is a thing of the least possible interest, it must seem very finnikin indeed.

Nowaday passions of appreciation and aversion are weak and poor. If you let your neighbour rifle your pockets, he will—sometimes—leave you alone to be whatever you choose, to talk to the winds and the clouds as you will.

Under King James there was more candour; and the distance between prince and poet was better insisted upon. Where did this latter pass his days? Was it not in wine-shops and places of evil allure, drinking and brawling with the vile, with serving men and ruffians? But though the men were debased, the artists were strong and pure and noble, aristocrats in their measure, preferring to lie upon the clouds of their proper divinity, though those clouds were but the fumes of wine, than to sit upon the mere velvet of a duke's furniture. And the actors meantime? Depend upon it, when Kit Marlowe lay sleeping across the table in a tavern, it would have been a safe bid to look for Will Hughes *beneath* the table.[7]

And so right down, even into present generations, the actor has been an outcast and a pariah, identified always with Bohemia—a condition of life hard enough for those who lead it, in some ways, but surrounded with all sorts of graciousness and pleasant sentiment.

The actor used to be branded with contempt. This, by odd perversion, was in some way a pleasure and satisfaction to him. Look to the generic names by which he had been called: mummer, mime, mountebank, play-actor; smelling contempt, there is yet about them a fondness almost as great as about the word Bohemian. *Hélas, la Bohème!* Bohemia is under the hammer, I am afraid, of an auctioneer who represents amalgamated School Boards, County Councils and Exeter Halls.[8]

All this to insinuate that the descendants of the true actor, the heirs of the authentic branch of the family, are no longer to be sought in the place that wilfully calls itself the Stage Proper, but in the Low Music Hall. The pretty miss and the university young man have driven out the rightful inheritors. For these, the artists, cannot be bothered to cavil with the ponderous and the serious. When the rain comes in through the roof of one booth, the artist, being what he is, and not a carpenter, merely walks quietly to another, to continue his reason for existence, leaving the irritated enemy in possession.

Now, being well assured who it is that, as a type, represents the genus actor, to seek to find who, for all practical and exalted purpose, the sentiment of tradition apart, is The Actor. To this end a remark or two is necessary upon the *theatre* as it exists to-day. Let us say that the time produces all that is wanted in the shape of plays. Let us say that the actor is great and wonderful. Let us say that the play-houses are well-ventilated in summer, perfectly warmed and free from draughts in winter; and assume that there is no charge for programmes. But the *theatre*, for the health and sanity of which the society that supports it is responsible? Why not say what we all know, that it is dead; dead, and buried under the boulders and pyramids of its own ponderousness. The corpse, of that thing that in life was so wondrous fair and so poetically neglected, is become matter of strange interest. Though as undoubtedly and ultimately dead as the crater of a model volcano, it is a source of continual anxiety, not only to itself, but to everybody else, by reason of the incidents of a frail

digestion. Apart from the porridge and pepsine which forms the staple of its sustenance, it can only take the apple-dumpling of melodrama occasionally, and much more rarely it indulges what it pretends is a most pronounced taste, for truffles. But when it is question of the strong meat of young vigorous drama, or the wine of romance, it has to resort to artificial digestion. The Jacobean drama it treats as game, hanging it up till it is rotten, then cutting away the breast of the bird and feasting morbidly on the skeleton.[9] As a working concern the theatre is become a limited liability company, that engages a specialist and hopes to thrive.

So, in spite of much that compensates the weakness and poorness and vanity of the dead theatre, its army of beautiful and talented mercenaries, the mechanism of its astounding stage effects, the splendour of the stuffs it gets from Mr. Liberty,[10] the third rate, catch-penny bric-a-brac with which it is forever ogling an over-educated pit, those of us who care at all about the matter must turn, if with sorrow, from the house of death, with its mocking and unseemly airs of vitality, to ferret out histrionic art in the humble lodging to which she has been driven. There she is for ever young, light of heart as of foot, gay and insouciante as on the day when shyly she first saw the light. She flouts the foolish lie that she had grown old and hideous and deformed. She has the magic to escape all these misfortunes.

The essential note in the tact and right wisdom of the Music Hall I take to be this: Never for a moment does it forget—or only in the rarest instances—for what purpose it exists. ENTERTAINMENT is its watchword. While it remembers that it is in the safe way. Manifestations of art come always bitterly to grief when seriousness overtakes them and they desire to instruct or elevate or philanthropise in any way soever. The spirit of art flees away by caprice, or is driven out; the cold, inert thing that is left, helpless, tries to galvanise itself into a semblance of life by uttering no matter what foolish propaganda.

Of course the pursuit of folly goes on. The blind and deaf throng madly to see and hear the tract in five acts; no doubt they do it with much pleasant feeling of self-congratulation. These are the lovers of *Robert Elsmere*, Germanism and the *tendenzroman* in all its aspects.[11]

There is scarcely a comparison possible between the warm, living stage and the dead one. The latter is naturally pompous, surrounded as it is with all its doctors and nurses. The other is sweet and coquette, clapping its hands as it dances, asking nothing of anybody.

A theatre, in the abstract sense, as I said earlier, is brought about by means of everybody who has anything to do with it. Its managers, playwrights, histrions,[12] and audiences are all responsible, though the division of responsibility varies from time to time. At this moment we have to thank the "artiste" for most that is of highest fascination upon his stage. He has brought elements of wonder almost gratuitously. Standing, as so many of them do, upon high pedestals of fame, these actors do not rest upon their laurels as they might. (For, once arrived at favour, these ladies and gentlemen get reputation and a following as serious as Mr. Irving's or Madame Sarah Bernhardt's.)[13] No, forever they bring new and newer, more consummate performances. And with how much accessory are their effects produced? Their properties are always of the rudest and simplest. The best, indeed, often do without them altogether, and are even indifferent to changes of light. Scenery, accessory of every sort, let us have them by all means; but the Music Hall, for whatever immediate reason, is practically without them. Its trashiest artiste has to face a difficult, a master feat—he must *act*, in the absolute sense of the word. His work is, by strength of personality and personal insight, to make something out of nothing, to so utter the words of his song as to give an illusion, to so dance that mechanical movements are rightly combined to a complete, a satisfying result in art. The evident indifference with regard to properties is significant. In my mind it goes to support a conviction, which is really perhaps only a fervent hope, that the Variety Stage of today is the embryo of a great

theatre, a theatre that will evolve in ways at which we can only guess, that in its maturity will be absolutely different from the comedy house we are asked to look upon as ultimate.

The LOVES of the AGE OF STONE

IT was a bright morning of late summer. A broad salt-smelling heath lay between the boulder - heaped cliffland and the sea ; the naked sea whose tumbling expanse no foot had ever trod, the unpassed country lying away for ever nowhither, to the mouth of the sun's own cave perhaps, or perhaps indeed nowhither. Above it the sky, blue, blue as the sea was green

"The Loves of the Age of Stone"

The Butterfly, 1 (July 1893), 142–151.

A baleful little piece in which the mores of Stone Age life make mockery of the word "love," and finally dismiss it altogether from the brutal power struggles which define its society. Gray's interest in the primitive—which he retained to the end of his life—is evident in his knowledge of neolithic artefacts and customs. But the fiction owes its success less to such realism than to the severe suppression of emotion and economy of language: a recoil from the "purple patches" usually associated with late Victorian prose.

The story was originally illustrated with five line drawings by Raven Hill, the co-editor (along with Arnold Golsworthy) of The Butterfly. *The magazine had a brief career, running for only ten issues, from May 1893 to February 1894. (Hill's line drawings are reproduced on the opposite and following pages.)*

The Loves of the Age of Stone

T was a bright morning of late summer. A broad salt-smelling heath lay between the boulder—heaped cliffland and the sea; the naked sea whose tumbling expanse no foot had ever trod, the unpassed country lying away forever nowhither, to the mouth of the sun's own cave perhaps, or perhaps indeed nowhither. Above it the sky, blue, blue as the sea was green, across which flew young white clouds, as white as the fleeces of the sea.

The spearman came up from the sea, almost a boy, with only the first blush of a beard upon him. It was commonly expected among the tribesmen that the spearman would one day be their headman. How near or remote that day might be they could not tell, for the reigning headman showed no sign as yet of flagging strength; still taking his tithe of meat and wives with no hesitating hand. And as to the spearman he was lithe if slight, agile if not of great strength, and his courage turned aside for no beast that glared. His burden as he came up from the sea was unwonted, a womanish load. The unsurpassed spearman had been scraping among the mud of the water edge like a bearer of children. He made little of the clams he carried upon a tray of woven osier, the fresh harvest of his labour since sunrise, though they were plentiful enough even, one would say, easily to effect the object for which the young spearman had taken them. Thus he came across the heath, light of foot, but sober of countenance, until he reached the rockskirted camp. Women looked up at his yodel from the fires they tended, and did not

immediately turn to their work, for envy of his fishing. Other women were picking over the maimed carcasses which lay in several places, separating with a stone the pieces of flesh which still hung to the skins. All the men were sullen, scarcely stirring, some all but asleep, for it was the morrow of a great feast, and excessive joy of supping had spoiled the expectation of breakfast. The moment was unfortunate, but the young spearman advanced, holding his tray before him, to the place where the headman leaned against a rock, with his fists one upon the other against his breast, as he had a manner when in wrath. As the spearman set down the tray of clams by his feet, he made the slight movement forward, just necessary to gain the complete support of his feet, and with a shake and backward jerk of his head he threw the hair from his temples. He laughed with malice and said to the boy: "An offering to the headman's wife?"

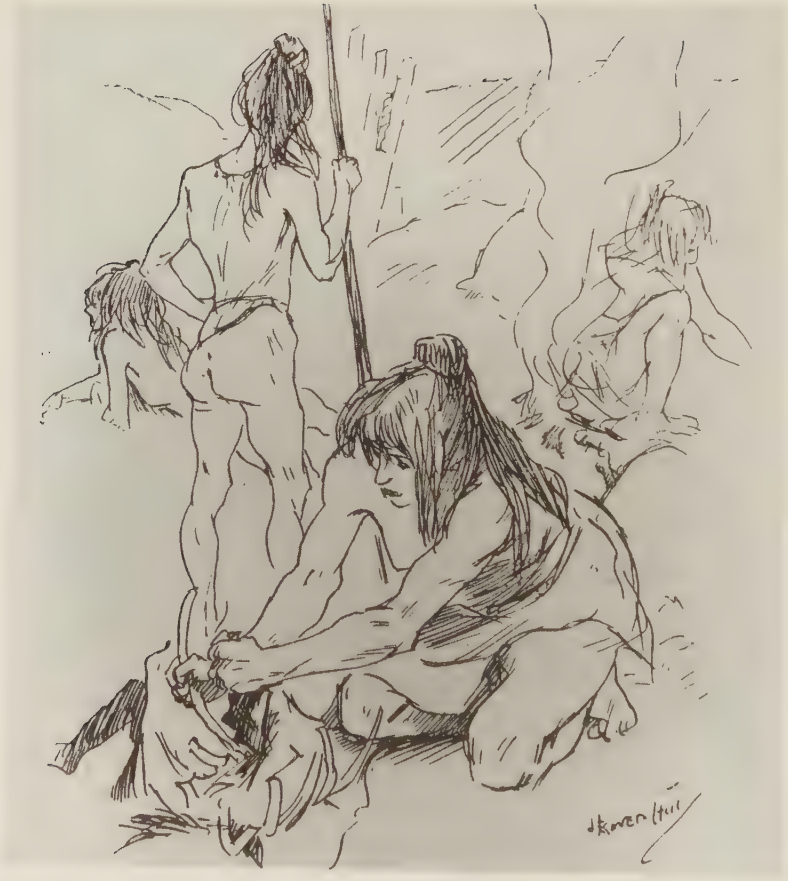
The tribesmen drew near cautiously. For all knew the suit of the spearman; that he offered clams and goodwill of service to the headman that he might take to wife the white girl, who was called so because she was white as the sea sand. Some knew beside that the headman was angry against the spearman because he was brave and lithe, and the headman's wife was fierce and wayward. The boy did not bow his head at his chief's words, but answered:

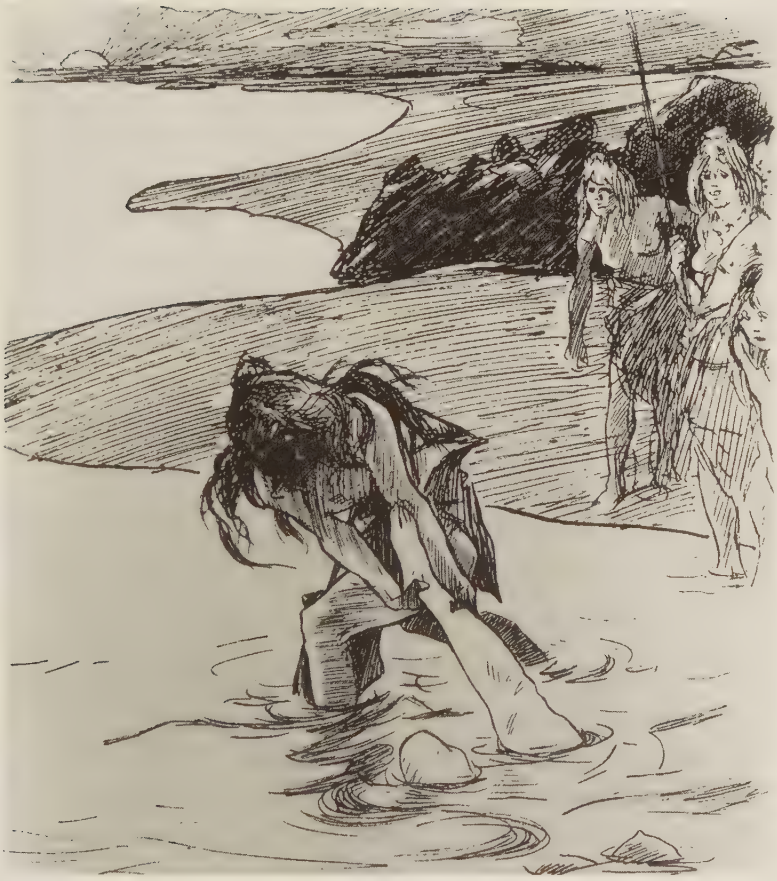
"An offering to the headman."

With that, too, he took his necklace from his neck. It was of bear's claws, the pride of his huntsman's craft, all pierced and stung, as a headman might not disdain. This he proffered to his chief, though it was a precious thing, with a frank, determined expression. As he did so the headman asked him:

"Do you offer claws to a bear?"

At this the boy drew back, withdrawing the necklace, and feeling with his left hand for the axe which hung in a simple loop of his girdle; which, save for his necklace and the like, with far fewer claws below either knee, was all the clothing he wore; yes, he disdained





so much as a shoulder-skin against the rain. The women left their fires and work, joining the men, so that now the whole tribe looked on in wondering silence, to see which of the combatants, the headman so gross and powerful, or the spearman so nimble and swift, would strike down the other and send him into the night. The battle was a short one; twice or thrice did the lad start from under the blow of his adversary. Had he but had confidence to fling his axe, young arm and true eye could not have failed; but, knowing his own agility, he counted upon the like in the headman, and feared to let his only weapon leave his hand. So that, his first blow guarded, the weight of a rush threw him to the ground, where he lay forever, the point of his chief's axe deep buried in his skull.

The victor, with that gesture of his, threw back his damp red hair from his face and looked savagely round the circle of the tribe. He picked up the boy's axe and place it upon his breast. The necklace, once offered him, belonged no more to the dead. He took it, placed it upon the neck of the white girl, and bade her help his wife to prepare breakfast. While two of the women, taking the boy's corpse each by a wrist, dragged it away into the bushes at the edge of the wood.

Rain had fallen during the day, and the evening was chill. Winding across the heath to the sea came a long file of the women of the camp to take fish among the rocks exposed by the unusually low tide, and score up the sand for silver eels. One of them carried a brand with which, when they returned, to ignite a great torch, to cover them from prowling beasts in the dark. The rest, with their primitive fishing implements, wore each a skin, covering herself with it as best she was able. All save the white girl, who wore none, by the malice, it seemed, of the headman's wife, whose associate she had been all day, and that but little to her comfort.

The sea sand lay tawny like a lion's fell, its hollows tufted with

coarse hairy growths. The shallow pools upon it caught and absorbed what little day was left. From seaward came the tumble of the distant breakers; from landward the cries of the braves as they danced at evening.

The sullen wives went straight down to the water, scarcely picking their way; for they liked not their labour. At a certain point the majority of them turned aside where a little gulf cut in through the sand among a heap of rocks. A few continued to the sea's edge; among them the headwife and the white girl. These, stooping, a man's length from the water, scratched hither and thither in the white sand with pointed stakes, till the white eels darted forth and were taken, and pushed quickly into the skin bag each wife carried at her waist.

The headwife and the girl worked side by side in silence. Not long, and they disputed an eel: the girl gave way. After this they worked even closer together, almost touching one another at times. A big, bright eel darted out; each struck at it with the flat of her hand; they came into collision, and the eel escaped into the water. Furious, the headwife struck the girl with her stake; and she, the white thing, recoiling in pain, dropped her bag, so that half her eels escaped. A second blow and she fell with a cry. Then the headwife beat her upon the head, again and again and again, though she cried no more. The women from the rocks ran near, and looked on in silent interest. For the headwife, taking her victim by one of her heels, waded knee-deep into the water, and walked to and fro a long distance, dragging her oscillating burden. Then she came out and looked for a time at the still, white and bruised body; till she left it, and having found what she sought, she returned, and with a great conch slowly scored the whiteness of the white girl from throat to thighs.

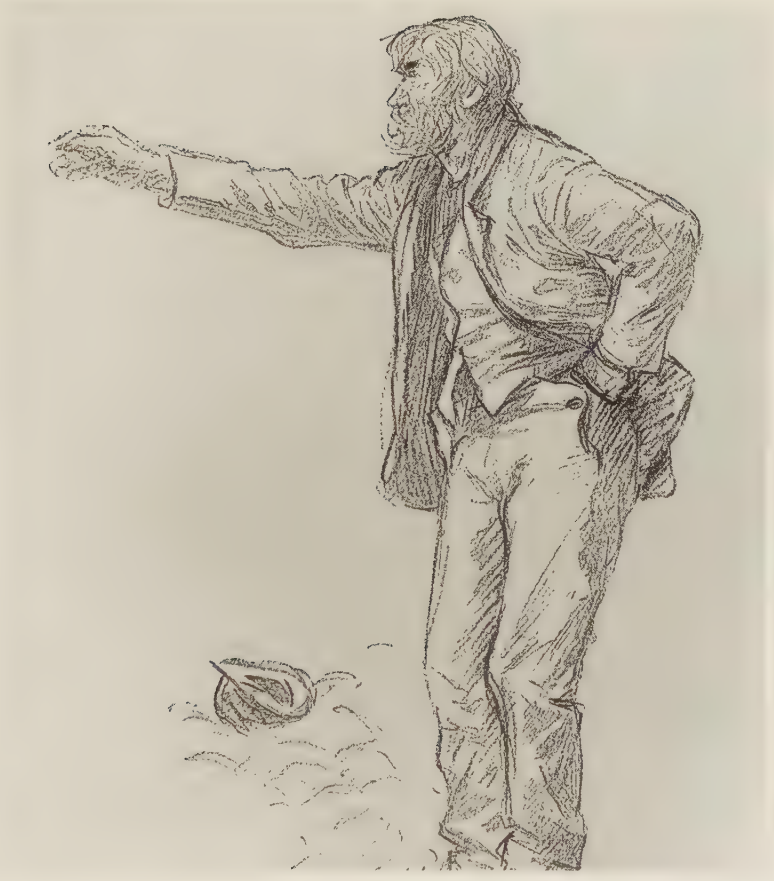
Then the brand was set to a bush twisted on a long stake, and with long, even strides all the women went back in silence through the dusk.

"Old Gough"

The Butterfly, 1 (October 1893), 335–344.

An example of Gray's naturalistic style, it reminds one (as Zaina remarks) "of some of the stories in the Keynotes series by writers who had read their Maupassant" (p. 77). Gray's father, a wheelwright, was clearly a model for "Old Gouth"—and his perversity might reflect a family trait, as Gray himself at this time often consciously acted against the grain. Gray also turns his own experience as an apprentice in the Woolwich Arsenal to good use in the detailing of trade union practice and attitudes of the working class of his day.

The original has three illustrations signed by O. Eckhard (reproduced on the oppostie and following pages).



Old Gough

HE men in the Wheel Factory had long been growing more and more discontented. Perhaps this was largely the fault of the foreman. He was old; he had been on the works since he was a boy; he had been apprenticed under the old partners, and any morning he was likely to be found dead over the desk in his little glass cabin in the corner of the shop. He managed badly; he had his favourites; the work was not well distributed; younger foremen contrived to shift their poor hands upon him and to filch his better men. Three at least of his forty odd men might well have been "sacked"; but so well did those three or four marked ones know how to turn his weakness to their advantage, that they managed to hang on in spite of him.

At one time the Wheel Factory had been what they called on the works, "a quiet crib"—a day-work shop, where, in consequence, rates were a trifle higher, and where the work was supposed to be of a better order than elsewhere. At piece-work, a man might earn half again the amount of his rating, while at day-work he could only draw his rated wages.

Now, it was neither one thing nor the other. The *mechanics* had dwindled to about five-and-twenty, and all sorts of rag-tag had drifted there. There were half a dozen copying-lathes, for example, and a couple of circular saws. The foreman had never been able to get even one hand-saw into his shop, and thus a whole section of well-paid and comparatively skilled work was monopolised "down

at the mills." Then he had two lads on his hands. These were rated as apprentices. Apprentices! They had been "let in" without premiums, their fathers being old employés of the firm. All they did was to cut wedges and turn pegs—a poor hour's work a day—loafing about for the rest, laying hands on this and that, to curry favour with "the men."

Everything was in a thoroughly unsatisfactory state. The Wheel Factory was no longer as it had once been, a thoroughfare. Scarely ever did any one pass through it; it was as dusty as a mill, and strangely well described by the pet name it bore, The Cemetery.

The mechanics were disgusted with it all: with their work, their foreman, their colleagues. The machine hands and labourers threw in their fate with these, their betters, in a common grumble and vague murmuring for higher rates. The demands were indeed vague; they scarcely knew whether they wanted more work, a higher rate, or each to try his fortune elsewhere. But about the disaffection there could be no mistaking: it was strong and general.

Save for one exception. Old Gough never grumbled. He was never seen whispering to the foreman until that dodderer turned away in confusion, red up to the roots of his hair; he got on with his job while others did this. For years his shop-mates had left him to himself; they did not much care for him: he was too indifferent. Anyone who would banter seldom got much change from him. But when discontent seemed to be coming to a head, a sudden desire arose in the shop to convert Old Gough to the general idea. One or another would come sidling up to him, to open a conversation; it was long before he would look up, and again long before he would put down the tool he was using. Then it would be, with chuckling derision,—

"Go out? What are you talking about? In most places you wouldn't have much choice, from what I've seen of you." Or, addressed more to the individual, "Then why don't you go? You're young. Anyone

would offer you three pounds a week before you got down the street. Go, if you're not satisfied; they'll respect you for it. You're young. It's different for an old man like me."

Then he would chuckle and resume his work. Old Gough had probably put his tools on his back oftener than most men of his trade. He had been over a good deal of the world. He sometimes spoke, in a tone of jesting brag peculiar to him, of going back to Shanghai. But though he "took it" from no one, he knew when he was well off far better than did most of the high-talking wheelers he worked with.

It is no light thing for an old man to look for a job, though Gough was a first-rate workman, and not a day more than fifty. Still, he had young children, his home was comfortable, and he meant more than he would have admitted when he said it was different for an old man.

Saturday noon came, the Wheel Factory knocked off, and the men went to get their wages of the week preceding. No one had even a passable bill, and the following Saturday the week they had just finished would be poorer still. Old Gough was supposed to have the best bill; but, following his custom, he kept the amount his own secret. The grumbles took clearer shape as the men left the works.

"Don't get downhearted," the foreman said to them with hollow cheeriness; "it'll be better next week." He had known of the discontent all along, but fear of the rap on the knuckles he would get in doing so prevented him from naming the ringleaders to his manager. The weak will always risk the greater to avoid the lesser evil.

Monday morning, first quarter, there was more talk than work in the Wheel Factory. Some had held council together meantime. Those who were not sore from the discontent of their wives at a short allowance were greedy to have the handling of a week's wages (though a poor one) on a Monday morning. Two of the men came up to Old Gough.

"Bob," said one, "we're going out after breakfast."

"All?"

"Yes."

"What for?"

"A better rate."

"How much?"

"A ha'penny an hour."

"You won't get it."

"No, but we'll get better work, and more of it."

After a good deal of parleying Old Gough agreed to join, on their solemn assurances of "meaning it." So, after breakfast, they all put on their coats, Old Gough, eyed curiously by the rest, last of all, and they stood in a group as a demonstration before the distracted foreman, who at last made up his mind to send one of the lads down to the office. At this moment the father of the other apprentice came round, and, finding his son with his coat on, soundly cuffed his ears. Then the strikers moved out into the yard in a body, where they stood sheepishly, looked on by men from other shops from a distance, and from round every corner in sight.

Presently the young partner came down to the yard with quick steps, throwing away the end of his cigarette as he approached.

"Well, men," he began hurriedly and very business-like, "what's this I hear? You don't think the firm's got work and won't give it you? You all know as well as the partners how slack things are, or you ought to. Some of you have been here twelve or fifteen years; go or stay as you like, but if you'll take good advice, I say: Think of your families, and get back to work sharp. The firm won't be hard; they know there's not much doing. It's the same everywhere. If you go out, I don't suppose you'll get a job this side of Botchester. For your own sakes, go back to your work."

No one answered, until Old Gough said, "You haven't heard what we want, sir; we've come out for a better rate."

"Take my advice, men," said the young man; and, turning to Old Gough, "As I tell you, go or stay; but I don't suppose you'll get a job this side of Botchester."

"Then perhaps," answered Old Gough, "I'll get a job on the other side."

The men looked at one another a moment, but seeing only each himself reflected in the others' faces, they turned tail, and filed into the shop. Only Old Gough held his ground. Wiping his face with his pocket-handkerchief broke the spell of his disgust, and he made a step in the opposite direction.

"Foreman," said the young partner coldly, "give this man a pass out for his tools. If you come down to the office with me, Gough, I'll give you your bill."

"The Advantages of Civilization"

The Butterfly, 2 (November 1894), 51–56.

The origin of the story probably lies in the incidents surrounding the visit of a young Catholic Zulu (called Mtembu) who came with a missionary priest and nun to stay with André Raffalovich in London. Gray's sister recalls that her brother was "very interested" in Mtembu. Raffalovich later wrote that "Mtembu . . . wore a sailor suit; he shuddered when offered a pear; he had been that day to the British Museum, and with his pocket statuette of St. Joseph and his gestures he conveyed to us the conviction that he had seen the Elgin marbles" (Zaina, p. 95).

Gray's work at the Foreign Office would have made him familiar with the situation in British territory abroad, although it is through the agency of the New Methodist Missionary Society that Dr. Bishop makes his way to London (perhaps reminiscences from Gray's early exposure, through his family's chapel-going, to the protégés of Methodist missionaries?). Gray also had a cousin in Ceylon (whom he mentions in a letter to Pierre Louÿs, 16 July 1892, as passing through London) and, later, brothers in South Africa and Canada.

The Advantages of Civilization

ASTER of arts, bachelor of sciences, doctor of medicine, doctor of divinity, doctor of laws, doctor of all faculties, academically honourable in all English-speaking lands, correspondent of all learned societies, honorary member of the Helsingfors guild of boatbuilders, chevalier of the profound order of the iron cross of Patagonia, member of the Abutabu municipality, wonderful, mighty was Zaccheus Bishop;[1] five-foot-eleven before he was civilized, big in the bone and not too graceful, full of jokes, fond of cabs, ready of wit, not unhandsome with his black eyes and bushy hair and magnificent teeth, the celebrated Fijian doctor.[2]

The New Methodist Missionary Society was proud of its son. He was a chief by birth of a chiefly line; his pedigree was written all over him. The natural man in him had thoroughly graduated in Fijian virtue, before the Reverend Mr. Solomon brought the oily piece of live mahogany to a knowledge of the truth; before the N.M.M.S. came to bed of the spiritual prodigy. He had led a tribe on the weather side of his native island, under a name he had himself chosen in a time of political trouble, which signified Up-four-trees. In one day the Society gained nine hundred converts (with a corresponding impoverishment of its resources; but this was momentary, and in the manner of a speculation). The report named the total at more than double that number; but then the report was sentimental, and counted women.[3] The chief was baptized (christened) Zaccheus. Mr. Solomon was a missionary of wit, and translated the chief's savage

name and title boldly into Christian: Zaccheus Bishop.[4] The reverend missionary then drew his pupil's attention to the beauties of the British alphabet. Zaccheus was sullen at first; he said his warriors wanted to dance; but the ready Reverend Mr. Solomon translated that maxim into Fijian: The first step is the hardest, and promised to teach him nap. Needless to follow him through all the steps of his progress; in the end Dr. Bishop was such a great man, that if his sanctity had equalled his learning in degree, the Society would scarcely have been big enough to hold him.

Dr. Bishop was back for the fifth time in "the old country" (he meant England); this time informally. Here a technical distinction is involved, the explanation of which would entail a correspondence with the Society. But as far as one can tell from outside observation, the present situation was something like this. The Society treasured its trophy, and worshipped his every act and word; but it liked him best when he was content to remain on some rock in his native ocean, teaching the inhabitant and "using his influence." On the other hand, the Doctor thought highly of the gifts and accomplishments he was able to place at the service of the Society. And as he knew a great deal, he passed the most of his time at the Grand Hotel. The Society discharged the bills. Certainly the committee queried and disparaged, and the Council sometimes came near action; but the situation remained. The Doctor was quite willing to discourse at Exeter Hall every day and all day; he was ready to edit all the Society's periodicals, audit its accounts, whip up the supporters, anything. The Society found it best to thank Heaven, in vague terms, for Dr. Zaccheus Bishop.

The Doctor continued his residence in Northumberland Avenue. Thank them, he was very comfortable; he begged them not to be anxious. And from day to day the wits of the Society were turned more and more towards the problem of filling up his time. (They called it "entertaining him.") He had preached in all their churches, lectured to every audience of two thousand they could get together,

inspected the Orphanage and the Working Boys' Club. He was busy with National Purity,[5] was writing his Life, paid frequent visits to the Colonial Office, and still had lots of leisure.

As a desperate step, the Doctor was sent one morning, in charge of a strong bodyguard from the Clapton College, to visit the British Museum.

"Delighted, Reverend Sir!" Dr. Bishop shouted, when he learned the object of Mr. Smith's visit. "Haven't been there for years. Have a cigar." The Reverend Mr. Smith didn't smoke. The two lights of divinity came down to the vestibule of the hotel, well contrasted: Mr. Smith, the principal of the Clapton College, ascetic and brushed to the bone; Dr. Bishop, shining, brushed he too, most certainly, but on the back of him was something to brush; his cravat and linen glistened with purity against his fine skin. All the spices of the Southern seas floated about him as he walked. His breast was gay with a buttonhole of three orchids. One detail about him was taken especial note of by each of the chorus of woolly-chinned youths waiting below stairs. They were the bodyguard. Mr. Smith almost used the word, in a moment of expansion he had, as the Doctor smiled upon them.

"Ah! yes, indeed, Reverend Sir," he said, ". . . so many of our young men . . . yes, indeed, the service of the cause is a blessed thing. Fond of flowers?" he added suddenly, to one of the party," . . . orchids . . . very pretty, aren't they? If you could see them in Fiji! They grow wild; yes, indeed, they do."

"Do they, indeed, Doctor?" the chorus intoned; and Mr. Smith added, *solus*: "Is that really the case?"

So the party arrived at the Museum, all but one out of breath. There was a brief pause on the steps to look at the two mumbo-jumbos under the portico.

"Idols? Quite right, idols." And the Doctor gave a great laugh, which made the theological students feel uncomfortable.

"This way, gentlemen," said the Doctor; "you must give up your umbrellas."

He handed in his cane separately, and pocketed the metal ticket briskly. Mr. Smith felt the leadership of the party was rapidly slipping from him; especially when the Doctor led the way into the gallery of the emperors. Without the spirits and *entrain*[6] of the Doctor the party might have turned Claptonward at this moment. Mr. Smith pushed his spectacles into his eyes. He was shy of antique art, and he had his students with him. These were troubled.

"Never heard of the Faustinas?"[7] said the Doctor to the student he had chosen as an object for his solicitude, in deprecating surprise. "That is a mistake; a divine cannot know too much. Marcus Aurelius; do you not know the thoughts of the Emperor?[8] Then I had better tell you." They passed slowly from bust to bust, the Doctor talking incessantly to the lad he had taken in hand of Caracalla, of Hadrian, Antinous, Caligula,[9] till the starveling thought he had a real vocation, and filled his lungs with a physical joy to find so much air side by side with so much intellectual interest. Mr. Smith simply sulked; and that in a way almost coquettish. He was quite willing to be consoled if the Doctor would only address his remarks to him.

They came to the Apollo Citharaedus,[10] and stood about in a semicircle. The students dared not yield to the temptation to look in one another's face.

"A noble piece of statuary, Reverend Sir," said the Doctor. (Reverend Sir beamed with sudden interest.) "A late Greek thing . . . *as you see.*" Mr. Smith had gathered a very decided impression from the statue, but it was not of an archaelogical character; so he looked scrutinisingly at the inscription to see if it was late or early.

"The physique of the figure is wonderful," he answered with fierce timidity, a neck-or-nothing admission.

"Yes, indeed," said the Doctor warmly, "yes, indeed, a fine

physique . . . and yet not too *fat*. I dare say, Reverend Sir, you do not know where the hands are of this very statue."

"No, sir, I do not," Mr. Smith confessed, as though his ignorance on this detail was curious.

"Ah! they are in the Königliches Museum zu Dresden."[11] (Sensation of the students.) "Such hands! they are better fed than mine, than yours too," he added, seizing the first hand he saw, in a way that startled its owner, "the thumbs especially; they are so full here" (his audience was open-eyed at his exaltation), "like a quail, or more like the leg of a fat partridge. Just look at those muscles across his shoulder, the collar bone is almost hidden." He laid his hand on the shoulder of his starveling friend, fixing him where he stood with fear. "And the same thing with his ribs. They must be covered with two inches of solid flesh. And see, Reverend Sir, the mass of his breast. If that were shoulder of mutton, how would you carve it?"

"! . . ! . . ! . ." The Doctor laughed loudly, and jerked his watch out of his pocket like a pea from a pod.

"I am afraid I must leave you, gentlemen; I am lunching with the Minister of Hawaii. I recommend you to go and have a good look at the Elgin Marbles."[12]

The Reverend Mr. Smith managed to loosen his tongue in his mouth, and say: "I hope you will enjoy your lunch, Doctor."

"The Yellow Princess"

Unpublished typescript from Gray archives, Dominican Chaplaincy, Edinburgh. Now in National Library of Scotland.

"The Yellow Princess" was probably among those stories offered John Lane in December 1893. Gray's acquaintance may well have identified as its model Alice, Princess of Monaco (1858–1925). Born Heine, a grand-niece of the poet, she was the widow of the Duc de Richelieu, marrying her second husband, Prince Albert Honoré Charles of Monaco, in 1889. She was known as a great patron of art and artists. In "The Diner-Out" (Horizen, October 1941) A.J.A. Symons offers an imaginative account of an actual dinner party given in 1891 at Claridge's by Frank Harris for the Princess, at which Oscar Wilde and George Moore were present. It was apparently at this dinner that Gray recited his poetry for the Princess, as she writes him (in an undated letter) a warm appreciation of his "strange, weird, fascinating verses." Gray dedicated a poem ("Les Demoiselles de Sauve") to her in Silverpoints. She may also figure as the model for the Princess I in Park.

The Yellow Princess

ELLOW-HAIRED and sallow, she looks as if she had forgotten to paint her face after dyeing her hair, or as if the yellow of her skin had run into her straight, smooth hair. Her eyes are dark and large and prominent; her features are insignificant, uninteresting, and her smile and the outline of her chin and cheek suggest the mechanical smile of a wooden figure. She is middle-aged; she can never have been pretty; she refuses and has refused the best known of the brilliant impecunious; she has no history.

In her box (always the same box) at the opera, in her yellow dress (gauze trimmed with feathers, or silk worked with gold, or satin with roses) she sits season after season. She comes every evening and listens with the same satisfaction to Verdi, Wagner, Bizet, Mozart, and Mascagni.[1] Her head with its yellow aigrette a little inclined on one side, she gazes at her yellow fan (ostrich feathers and *écaille blonde*)[2], and looks almost bored when the curtain falls at the end of the act that precedes the last. Then she always gets up, accepts the arm of some attentive man who is absolutely indifferent to her, and drives home to supper when she does not sup out. Supper is the only meal she likes out of her house. She hates to be left alone, and she also hates giving up her solitude. She has no ear, she does not know anything about music, she scarcely can tell a soprano from a contralto, a tenor from a baritone, and yet her greatest pleasure is to listen quietly to music and singing. She is like those people who

spend their days reading circulating library books, whose titles and whose contents they forget as soon as they have read them.

She is very rich. She does not care for society. She neither wants to shine among the small nor among the great. The claims of philanthropy and those of snobbishness have no hold on her, and she would as little allow herself to be bothered by a dull duchess or snubbed by a rude one, as she would be bled by a charitable dowager. She has few interests and few follies. Hers is a very empty but not a hollow life.

At eighteen—eighteen years ago—she was a strangely romantic girl, who lived for an impossible and unknown lover on whom she meant to lavish her fortune and her love. She was vain, she was ambitious, she was coquettish, she was all she was, in fact, for her ideal; and as one always meets one's ideal, she came face to face with hers. She did not know that he was her ideal at first: it took him and her some time for that to happen. He only presumed to paint her portrait, and she did not know when she consented that she would love him in the end. He painted her in a rich Eastern dress, but being an impressionist and not a very successful one, he did not flatter his model. She blazed on his canvas in all the colours of the rainbow, but all the yellow was in her poor face; hence the comic papers called the picture The Yellow Princess. His seeing her yellow did not prevent her from loving him, and from showing it, and the dazzled young painter "began like an eagle to gaze more boldly on the sun of" (he called it "love" in his letters to her) fortune! She adored him. She would have died for the little man, the plump little man with the cold eyes and the soft voice, and at last with many tears and many kisses the yellow princess and the impressionist painter agreed that they were meant for each other.

They wrote long letters, but neither dared to speak to her guardian. Wait, she always said. Waiting was hard, and at first not profitable—until she discovered (in spite of all his attempts at concealment) that

his money troubles were driving him to despair, and then she offered him what she had saved of her pocket money. He refused. He was deeply offended; but (as they met so seldom) his anger dropped, and not to grieve his guardian angel, his golden queen (as he called her on account of her hair), he accepted. He grew to be less and less offended, and at last to accept quite amiably. Was she not to be his wife, and was he not merely having now some of the crumbs of his future income?

Months passed away thus. She lived more and more in a world of love, and it seemed to her that there was no one save her little lover who could stir her heart and fill her dreams; and she intended when she came of age (only two years to wait) to make him prince of her golden realm. She went to stay with some relations in the country. The house was full, and she was much petted; she was eager, lively, and so rich. One of the guests who noticed her least was a slightly impecunious young stockbroker, not very interesting, not very handsome, whom no one disliked, about whom nobody gushed. There was nothing striking about him. He was an ordinary young man, one of the sort easily replaced, and only missed by those who love him. The yellow princess and he had talked about commonplaces in a commonplace way. She did not even know the colour of his eyes or the spelling of his name. One evening after dinner they were walking in the garden. It was a moonless, warm, summer night. She stumbled, and might have fallen if he had not caught her. And somehow (whether it was a way of his or whether he was suddenly struck by the power of her gold) in a narrow path under a thick tree, the branches of which brushed against them as they passed, he put his arm around her waist and kissed her half a dozen times, and his seventh kiss was returned; and then the sound of voices made them hurry on towards the light. The yellow princess had a headache, she said, and went to her room. The world had changed, there was nothing left of the old world. She had felt the same happiness, the same romantic superhuman bliss in the shadow of that tree as when

her dearest, her only love, had murmured adoring words. It was dreadful, it was horrid, it was wonderful. It was the turning point in her life.

She thought, she thought, that night. She could not sleep. She had made a discovery and she was overwhelmed with its importance. One thing was certain: her love was dead; she could never again think that her painter was her twin soul. She shuddered as she thought of him, of his weakness, of his greed, of his insincerity. Nor did she turn with more tenderness to the other man who had unwittingly taught her so much. She did not blame him, but she hoped never to see him again, and if she had heard of his death she would have had a sense of relief. Herself she did not treat with more consideration. "Fool! fool! fool!" she cried; and a hot flush of shame and mortification brought tears to her eyes.

That was eighteen years ago, and that is why she has never loved, never married, and why year by year she has grown more strange, more eccentric, more dull also, more suspicious of herself and of others, and why she has narrowed her life for fear of losing her freedom.

Yellow-haired and sallow, as if she had forgotten to paint her face after dyeing her hair, or as if the yellow of her skin had run into her smooth, straight hair, in her yellow dress (gauze trimmed with feathers, satin with roses, silk worked with gold), she listens to Mascagni as she has listened to Verdi and as she will listen, empty-hearted though not hollow-hearted—and yet (who knows?) if a loud-voiced underbred young man, with plenty of bombast and a little power, came and wooed her hurriedly, roughly, I think that he might win the golden princess and her golden realm.

"Their Mothers"

Unpublished typescript from Gray archives,
Dominican Chaplaincy, Edinburgh.
Now in the National Library of Scotland.

Originally titled by Gray "For Worse: Angela," the typescript marks this story as the third part of a series (as far as is known, there are no other parts extant). The original title has been crossed out and the present one written above it in the hand of Gray's companion, André Raffalovich. Raffalovich was also responsible for two minor stylistic changes near the end of the story.

Their Mothers

S they sit side by side in a box (like this evening) or in the stalls—they are indefatigable first-nighters—or facing each other—they entertain—or when in the same room—they are much entertained—they seem politely unacquainted or say a little sentence to each other with a smile perhaps. Charming, handsome, young, rich, sleek, prosperous, they are admired, envied even; who knows? They are so ornamental and life deals with them so kindly. They married for love (so-called), and yet not unwisely from the point of view of what is called the world . . . . And sometimes they not only look at each other, but see each other, though as a rule when they gaze on each other for a moment in public their brains *refuse* to receive or to notice the image on the retina: he sees her now as he gives her the programme.

Exquisitely pretty still, with her long narrow malicious eyes, her dainty nostrils, her red baby mouth so long and thin and ironical when it laughs, with her lively dimpled chin, with the complexion of an unknown flower, and red-brown hair—almost as pretty as when she played (the first time he liked her) with her little flaxen-haired nephew, pelting him with roseleaves and handfuls of wet grass, some grass and some roseleaves clinging to her mauve dress—almost as pretty as when during her honeymoon she struck her husband's face with a bunch of stinging nettles because he had dared to playfully stroke her cheek with a dewy rose—not more malicious than when she innocently looked on whilst the cat captured the two

canary birds that sang so shrilly in the country inn where she bored herself with her husband during three wet days—not more malicious than when he once saved a drowning dog and appeared before her dripping and dirty—and not less hateful and wonderful than she suddenly seemed to be, almost on her wedding day, no! going back in his memory, even before. A malicious expression on the face he compared to an unknown flower, a smile of mean and petty derision that lengthened these narrowing lips had given her once an extraordinary interest in his eyes, and day by day her face had grown more fascinating, the tone of her voice more alluring, on account of something undefined in her, of something obscure in him. He did not, he could not, analyse what deepened and intensified the thought of her and of her prettiness, until he discovered that he *hated* her.

It was not dislike, nor disgust, nor disapprobation, but a feeling more akin to love, though the very reverse, paradoxical as it may seem to the inexperienced. The antagonism of their natures and the repulsion he felt for her had suddenly expressed themselves that day when her malicious smile became cruel, and her malicious look wicked, and the prettiness of her face merely irony. (He sometimes compared that prettiness to a slap in his face.) He realised that she would always prefer laughing at him to laughing with him, that she would prefer hurting him to pleasing him, that if she could only make him ridiculous she would think more of herself, that she was the born and made critic, that whatever she did not understand she would deny, that whatever she was incapable of she would pull down, that whatever she failed in she would never forgive in others.

She (however much she loved, if she could love) would never lose the ironical smile, the smile of ignorant contempt, that Frenchwoman's smile, which may spur on some men, but which leads others to desperation. She was the woman who (if sincere) would say *pas mal*, and think *pas mal*[1] when most deeply moved. He may have been mistaken in the accuracy of his memory; she may not have been to him then what she became, but there is no doubt that

now he hates her. Hate is as satisfying to some natures as love to others. It is as interesting.

She catches the look in his eyes and understands it, and shares it and laughs a little hard laugh, although she could sigh. She too hates him, but in her own way. He was soon out of love with her, he could not endure her wit (as she calls her sarcasm), her originality (as she calls her caprice), her unconventionality (as she calls her want of what is called moral sense), and her youth (as she calls her unsuccessful bringing up). She gave him the best she had, and he has despised her for it, and he has not yet suffered as he ought to suffer. What is a woman to do who is unluckily yoked? A woman's revenge recoils on the woman, and she is afraid. She meant to tame him when she married—to bring to her feet this tall, florid, good-looking man, and to keep him there—and she could only follow her nature, use her weapon and sting him. She grew almost mad, like an enraged insect, and stung and stung in her waspish fury.

He thinks of their two children, of their resemblance to their mother. He is inclined to accuse her of spite in giving him two such copies of herself; even the boy has his mother's mouth and torments all his sister's pet animals.

She thinks that her two chances have been lost, spoilt, that she cannot love children that have their father's hard loveless eyes and his foolish easy ways, and his laugh and his languid gestures. And yet she does try to be the fond adoring mother. She can at any rate be more kind to them than he is, and when he reproves them gently for some fault (in which he sees her) she can cry with them and give them sweets and kisses; she can at least undo all he does; but it is a weary life.

Had she been poor she would long ago have gone with a bandaged head to ask a magistrate for advice, but in her set pokers are not used for correcting wives. Had she not been a prudent and a civilized woman, she might have put some poison in his food, but in her set

who does it? Besides she gets more afraid of him. His nerves are under control, hers are not.

They seldom speak very unpleasantly; their conversation is like that of two well-bred and suspicious and worldly opponents. They are on their guard. Before strangers they are very civil, though they may imply a certain satire now and then. But oh! the perfidious little suggestions, the half confidences she makes to her friends about him, the innuendos, the sighs, when she feels desperately worsted. And oh! the cool way in which he ignores her existence when he is with his friends, the two or three chilly words with which he receives any praise of her. Occasionally he may tell some very slight and very humorous story *against* her—she is sensitive on a few points.

There are no loud words between them, not even very long silences. How willingly they would quarrel! not roughly, not honestly, but still quarrel, and they don't because of the servants, because of the children, because it would please their friends. . . .

She cannot flirt. She is afraid of him. She can humiliate him, disparage him, but when a man whispers words that she should not hear, she has a shiver down her back; if her husband could hear too! . . . . . And sometimes, being a woman and nervous, she feels that it is all too hard, too painful, that she cannot live on alone, with no one to help her, and she could almost, since he is a man after all, fall at his feet or on his neck, and ask to be comforted; but she knows too well that no comedy, no tragedy, could make him believe her, and that his incredulity would be justified, as at the moment when she asked for love the bitterness of hate would blaze anew in her heart . . . . And that is how they spend a pleasant evening at the theatre.

"The Redemption of Durtal"

The Dial, 4 (1896), 7–11.

A review of J.– K. Huysmans, Là–Bas (Paris: Tresse & Stock, 1891). En Route (Paris: Tresse & Stock, 1895).

Joris-Karl Huysmans (1848–1907) became associated with the naturalists and—after the publication of his notorious novel, A Rebours (1884)—the decadent movements of the late nineteenth century. Its hero, the dandy Des Esseintes, is succeeded in Là–Bas and En Route by Durtal, whose spiritual progress from Satanism through Mysticism to a formal conversion to the Catholic Church parallels Huysmans's own repentance and conversion.

Although this review once again underlines Gray's claim to being a literary mediator between France and England, at the time it was written Gray's literary ambitions were waning, or were put to the service of his newly-found faith. Huysmans's hero would have been particularly attractive to him as Durtal charted the tormented journey from the "inverted spiritism" of the decadent aesthete to the repentance of the acknowledged sinner. Gray was to take a similar route from his "course of sin," repentance and immersion in mystical verse which was to result, in the year of this article, in the publication of Spiritual Poems. As a glance backward over his own spiritual history, therefore, this review represents Gray's farewell to his life as the dandy "Dorian" Gray.

The Redemption of Durtal

HUYSMANS has treated the subject of repentance;[1] rarest of all perhaps in pure literature. The *degree* of the treatment, if such an expression may be used, makes the new book peculiar; certainly as prose and fiction: the penitent being a man of profound baseness; the spiritual progress being narrated both as far as an author dare, and as exhaustively as skill and patience are capable.

The friends between whom he isolated himself intellectually, des Hermies and Carhaix, dying within two months one of the other, Durtal is thrown upon silence and solitude. From the desolation immediate upon his loss, by way of a projected life of Blessed Lidwine,[2] he comes to a point of spiritual uncertainty, that is to say, to the only spiritual situation possible for him. Then begins the story of any conversion in the world's memory, not restricted to the era of grace.[3]

Durtal, with his history of the Maréchal Gilles de Rais,[4] Durtal, who goes the length of digging up the Satanism of the Middle Age from modern cloaques of revolting depravity, whose vanity it would have been to be the last possible recipient of grace, is the object of an "attouchement divin."[5] This is the spiritual crisis well known to what is called Mysticism, the science which, for want of a name, has taken this most misleading of all names. The germ once planted grows with irresistible force, so assumes the direction, so absorbs the attention, of Durtal, that suddenly he is aware only of the fact that he *believes*, as he says, with not a trace in his memory of any step

by which he has passed from the lethargy of decay to the anxieties of a living growth.

Then it is a ravenous pursuit of all the spiritual writings the Romance languages hold, from Saint Denys the Areopagite[6] to Father Faber[7] (a reservation later), a restless pilgrimage through all the churches of Paris. The torment ensues; the struggle of habit with the inexorable, unknown impulse; till agony drives Durtal to an earlier acquaintance, the abbé Gévresin.[8] Follow the conferences of the two men, the one deeply skilled in the malady, the other floundering in all the helplessness such a patient can exhibit. The great stage is reached when, through means of the abbé's monitions, Durtal, at length pushed by a power he feels has taken possession of his very will, goes into a retreat with the Trappistes, makes his confession, is absolved and communicates. The ten days passed at La Trappe[9] occupy half the book.

The record is closely consecutive; digressions are few and under the direct warranty of M. Huysmans' art. The bridge-work from *Là–Bas* is such as might be expected from so accomplished a writer; the solidification of the setting in which Durtal has to move bears the cachet of the Magician. Elaborate information, pitiless visual observation, a rare sensibility, under the play of an obstinate method, which advances fearlessly upon the longest category, ready at each shift with a more exasperated epithet, lacerate every scene, make nervous and vibrant each foot of the panorama before which the haggard, despicable hero is forever hounded.

Above all, what is seen is through the eyes of Durtal; the comments upon the scene are those of the deteriorated Sensitive. M. Huysmans has not hesitated, in the enthusiasm of his subject, to expose the genus scriptor[10] as few who know the truth have the courage to do, priggish, vulgar. Here is the perfection of the attempt less perfect before, to present the baggage of the écrivain[11] with his finical person; M. Huysmans evidently agreed with his friends' verdict on

Là–Bas in this feature, for now complete fusion has repaired the earlier fault.

Choice must be recognised in the circumstance of Durtal's conversion being brought about in the lap of the Church. Hence (and of course it could have been effected *directly*) applause falls to the judgment of M. Huysmans. What a bait to his talent the modern, actual aspect of the Church, its agglomerations of styles and traditions! The sensitiveness of Durtal discerns a whole new facet of a mysterious gem at any moment when he is set down to assist at an office. Hearing the voice of a priest whom he cannot see, he can speak of "la vaseline de son débit;"[12] and at the same time find the due expression of the plain-chant a worthy pursuit of a life-time. Its architecture and structural accessories; its images, music, liturgies; the orders of religious, their dress, rules, even pronunciation; the amount of light, the smell, the quality of the worshippers; nothing about the Church which is not of deep interest. But nearer yet to the author's purpose the Church is of vital importance to Durtal; during the period of his spiritual convalescence it gives him *something to do*. Without its insinuations, its constant allurements, its demands upon the laborious attention of the sufferer, it is safe to say *En Route* could not have been written; as it is M. Huysmans is obliged to resort to a fully pardonable deceit, and simply omit to mention what Durtal did with the great part of his day.

Having chosen the Church, M. Huysmans shows further wisdom in keeping his hero to an orthodox route. Here again he tacitly asks indulgence of the interested reader, and surely not in vain. As a matter of fact, Durtal, as we have been brought to know him, could not have been kept away from the Heresies. M. Huysmans' caution, in view of this certainty, is extreme. Though one or two German mystics (out of scores) are named, Dr. Tauler, Suso, the two Eckharts and Catherine Emmerich,[13] not one (save the last) is suffered more than a mention by Durtal, for the reason that these are the door of ceremony to the most absorbing of the heresies. Durtal among die Brüder des freien

Geistes![14] Durtal with the history of der Gottesfreund vom Oberland[15] in that valise of his, with the chocolate and the laudanum! The most remarkable "attouchement" ever recorded, that of Tauler, cannot be alluded to. Catherine Emmerich, for reasons, falls across the hard boundary; she is almost alone in this century a mediæval visionary and stigmatisée; the passion of her life and utterances is all an excuse, in face of a tactic however severe. But doubled discretion has to forbear carefully from mention of Clemens Brentano;[16] lest Durtal, studying the voluminous diary of nine years' daily intercourse with the illuminated sister, should recognise himself in Clemens, himself with more aplomb, more verve, and lose his road beyond hope.

The whole scheme of this history required a certain harshness, dryness, poverty. Much had to be sacrificed to the purpose of making a novel of such a subject. This accounts for here and there the begging of a question. M. Huysmans holds the novel form to be almost as exacting as that of the sonnet. The length of the book determined from the outset within the limit of half a page, the need for proper balance of all the considerations the novelist has to bear compels him to set his face sternly against any but the most urgent situations. Add to all the proper restrictions of the form M. Huysmans' deliberate rejection of the symbol. This is the writer of *Marthe*, of *En Ménage*, the unflinching realist, whose faith is that his system can employ all possible subtlety.

One example of dexterity in turning humble circumstance to beauty, of skilful determination, by simple refinement of observation, of the hour, the vibration of the atmosphere, the pulse even of the supposed observer: Le temps était tiède, ce matin-là; le soleil se tamisait dans le crible remué des feuilles; et le jour, ainsi bluté, se muait au contact du blanc, en rose. Durtal, qui s'apprêtait à lire son paroissien, vit les pages rosir et, par la loi des complémentaires, toutes les lettres, imprimées à l'encre noire, se teindre en vert.[17]

One brilliant episode suffers quotation by its shortness:

Il faisait nuit noire; à la hauteur d'un premier étage, un oeil de boeuf ouvert dans la mur de l'église trouait les ténèbres d'une lune rouge.

Durtal tira quelques bouffées d'une cigarette, puis il s'achemina vers la chapelle. Il tourna doucement le loquet de la porte; le vestibule où il pénétrait était sombre, mais la rotonde, bien qu'elle fût vide, était illuminée par de nombreuses lampes.

Il fit un pas, se signa et recula, car il venait de heurter un corps; il regarda à ses pieds.

Il entrait sur un champ de bataille.

Par terre, des formes humaines étaient couchées dans des attitudes de combattants fauchés par la mitraille; les unes à plat ventre, les autres à genoux; celles-ci, affaisées les mains par terre, comme frappées dans le dos, celles-là étendues les doigts crispés sur la poitrine, celles-là encore se tenant la tête ou tendant les bras.

Et, de ce groupe d'agonisants, ne s'élevaient aucun gémissement, aucune plainte.[18]

This can only delight, not surprise, coming from the master of this mode. And though it will inform no one, the flawlessness must be noted of the neuropathy which is so important a feature of the book.

Of the study of Durtal himself one feels that, isolated, it would have been more interesting than the whole presentment as it stands. The fragment of a spiritual career is exact enough to support the application of the gauge, the maxim actually cited: La Mystique est une science absolument exacte.[19] It is necessary to remember that what is given us is really only a fragment; not, as the ignorant are certain to say, the whole course and exhaustion of spiritual operation in a man; a fragment, to speak truly, quite elementary, and scarcely spiritual at all in results.

All through, Durtal remains deeply ignorant of what is taking

place, when a very small amount of insight in the study of the books with which he thinks himself saturated should at least sometimes inform him. All the utterances of the saints he has the fortune to fall among are servilely reported by him, with never a word of spiritual criticism on his part, not even the most rudimentary. We do not find him ever admitted to the simplest "communion of saints;" the impulse within him, the "touche divine," the "angelic influx," the "Kingdom of God," Goethe's "dämonische,"[20] to cite a few of its thousand names, never says to Durtal directly anything more complicated than: Do what this man tells you. He is always in the wretchedness of his spiritual beggary. What really surprises is that he should not blunder upon the first truth of an awakening, that he must go back over the way by which he came. Usually this is easy to a man who has been so wicked as Durtal; the keen quest of infamy being extra physical in some aspects, a mode of inverted spiritism, in a manner to make a spiritual process seem known already the moment it is suggested.

He is found constantly looking, stupidly, for a miracle to take place in him, a violent destruction of his past, the swift summoning to being of some fruit of long, laborious growth. The "attouchement" is not miracle enough for him. He craves, in his peculiar vulgarity, in the vanity of his worthlessness, a theatrical sign, an explosion of redemption and miraculous repair, an alchemistic operation in favour of his rag of spiritual disposition.

The only reflection he can make upon the contemptuous refusal of the abbé to work in his behalf as he considers himself entitled is a culinary: tous ses conseils se réduisent à celui-ci; cuisez dans votre jus et attendez.[21]

Herein is seen the fidelity of the author already remarked, not to let wriggle out of sight the radical vulgarity of Durtal. His basest sophistry does not make him contemptible enough; the real bitter drop he is forced to swallow again is his vulgarity: . . . ces messes

gargotées comme l'on en cuisine tant à Paris . . . ils me verseront à pleins bols leur bouillon de veau pieux! . . . Ses chantres y barattent une margarine de sons vraiment rances![22]

Durtal has much to say upon all the graces and exquisitenesses, a great deal about the Primitives;[23] for every sound he will have an epithet at all hazards, often drawn from a mute source. But at every few pages the reader falters upon the reiterated signature of one of these unpleasant metaphors. Durtal, further, had exhausted the *paregoric* virtues of the Gospels. Saint Bonaventura condense en une sorte d' *of meat* des modes pour méditer sur la communion.[24] The reward of translating this criticism upon Saint Bonaventura is the image of a little tin box containing a disgusting chemical aliment.

The Trappistes were right who told Durtal that every wonder was small beside the fact of his being in any disposition of penitence soever. The great thing for Durtal was to be kept ignorant of his real state and prospect; it would have been very little encouraging for him to know. His confessor at La Trappe told him that he had been so sick that one might say of his soul: Jam foetet;[25] he did not tell him that no other thing could be said of his body. The body of Durtal is as lost as is possible; there is no more hope for that. The soul of Durtal has to make a journey so long that a view of it would ruin him. At the point of utmost progress in *En Route* he is at the beginning of the purgative life. In a very long time he will still be at the beginning.

"Niggard Truth"

The Pageant, 1 (1896), 20–36.

It is known from a letter of Gray to John Lane, 11 December 1893 (Berg Collection, New York Public Library), that "Niggard Truth" was written by that date. During this winter, Gray was devoting himself to the poetry that was to appear in Spiritual Poems (1896) and was thus preoccupied with spiritual issues. It is worth noting also that 1893 was the year that his mother (now a widow) converted from her native Evangelical (Methodist?) sect to Roman Catholicism; subsequently, Gray's two younger sisters, Sarah and Beatrice, were both raised in this faith.

The Pageant was an annual edited by Charles Shannon and Gleeson White. The opening initial in the 1896 printing is illuminated by an intricate interlace design (presumably by Shannon).

MDCCCXCVI.

EDITED BY C. HAZELWOOD SHANNON AND J. W. GLEESON WHITE. PUBLISHED BY HENRY & CO. FROM THEIR OFFICES AT 93 SAINT MARTIN'S LANE LONDON.

Niggard Truth

ARRIET came of farmers. The stout race hesitated and hoped in the strong girl; at last, for she never had any children, finished with her. Her mother had followed Whitefield,[1] and Harriet held to the new Protestantism; the men, decidedly retrograde here, were all for Pope Denys.[2] At the time when Harriet first had a real existence, symbolism might have called the grand-dad Silenus, the father Gambrinus,[3] the brother Dionysos. These drank and drank; oftenest in their own complete and scandalous company; but at all times they drank. She said nothing, there being nothing to say. Their cult brought her a new, at times harassing, duty: to see them laid out all three at night in the warm kitchen, their cravats loosened, and the fire safe extinguished. The disgrace of her family added little in the country to her own disgrace of Methodism. Her friends the Methodists found nothing surprising in the unregenerate state of men who had not come under the only possible saving influence. The farm went on, in a fashion, thanks to Harriet. Had she been less active and intelligent than she was, she might have managed it to profit, and her kinsmen might have been her terrible luxury. Her activity never hesitated to carry out what a servant did other than to her liking. Whatever her hands touched was a pattern. Yes; but the servants—especially as she was kind, and often, of necessity, ignorant—pandered to her mania to do her own work herself. The farm, too much for her, had at last to be let to keep up the mortgages.

They had been rich, now they were poor. Harriet had nothing in

her hands but work and care. The "pretty trio" had the management of all else; their management followed its policy unhesitatingly to the logical end. Then the father and the brother died, and were buried. Silenus, missing them, became idiotic and eccentric. He took liquor in sudden aversion as a beverage; but, buying and getting what he could, he bottled and sealed drams which he buried all over the country; and then, like a dog who would know how his hidden bone putrefies, he visited all the nooks strangely, staying out at night even to follow his poor fancy.

Harriet never ceased to work, either for gain and living, or for mere work's sake. Once she had to repair her stays; she remade them. A neighbor saw, admired, and had her own renewed. Another and another commission, and Harriet was proficient with a definite occupation. She knew not how to mark time. Before long she had discovered an 'improvement' which made her wares famous, which later she sold for a hardly bargained £600. She had her consolation in the great days of the patent, that she had fought hard for a good price, bumpkin girl as she was at the time of the sale.

Old Silenus died at last. Harriet, under contract to refrain from staymaking, was busy as ever with some equally ingenious labour. She never stopped to visit or idle, only going out to attend the offices of her church, or rather "chapel." There she was most punctual; the chapel's life coincided evenly with hers.

The first time the new minister preached, Harriet selected him for a husband. It was Hugh Porter, the young man who came in the face of so many prejudices, being so young, and ugliness not compensating as much as it should. He had once had a kick in the face from a horse, whence a hideous malformation. He preached for an opening with more than passion, with violence. Afterwards, and for many weeks, he was quiet, learned. Harriet watched him carefully; compared, heard him critically; at first thought him tactful, executing a plan; only found out later that it was all accident, that the

heaviness of his beginnings was but nervous defiance and waste of ammunition. The sooner he had a calm friend at his elbow the better for him; and in addition she made a memorandum in her mind—for use in their married life, recognising a radical fault.

They became acquainted. Harriet was very submissive to her "minister," without shyness; in such a way that, in presence of her humility and deference, he forgot his regret that he was not a clergyman. She did not mind his lack of judgment; he would have many other lessons to learn. She took no umbrage at the rude way in which he set about his "inquiries" into the conduct of her secluded life; and he thought himself so wise in this inquisition.

"I never thought I should marry my minister." The pitch of her voice, the smile, the gravity which made her face look thinner as she said these words, almost gave him a glimpse of the future; but the marriage took place. It was soon found that he was extremely delicate. And the course of what are called unforeseen circumstances turned strangely from the time of Hugh Porter's marriage. Underhand measures on the part of his deacons threw him out, made him redundant for a time, obliged to preach every Sunday from a different pulpit. Then it was he began to understand Harriet. Then, for the first time in his life, he wrote out his sermons entire, and again and again. Then, to patience and kindness in Harriet, he rehearsed delivery at oration pitch, and noted gesture. Shrewd Harriet! He took her advice, and refused the first offer of a pulpit as second in a circuit, alleging that he had some intention of going into a retreat, like Saint Paul into Arabia. In three months, the fame of his preaching was ringing every week in *The Recorder*. Then a remarkable event, what in business is called a "deal," took place between the Wesleyans and the Methodists. A curious notion of Pan-Methodism was abroad, and a minister was exchanged for a great occasion in either body. Hugh Porter was to preach in the great Walworth Road Church in London—to Wesleyans. Harriet was present, in a place where Hugh could not see her. She heard his very low yet distinct preliminary

announcement: "My text will be found . . . ." Right! And then she waited for the opening phrase, almost performing mentally the process of sounding a tuning-fork. Right again! And he kept it up; he showed what was in him. Higher and higher the flood of his oration swelled, and ever the language grew more precise, the argument stricter. Till the last sentences came, sinking masterly to the tone on which he began, and the closing words sounded sweet and distinct as the first. He took the beef-tea she offered him in the vestry in silence. Harriet could not trust herself to speak, for joy.

The Recorder, a well-managed paper, knowing the thoroughness of the Wesleyan organ, came out on Wednesday, not only with the sermon at length, but with a leading article upon it, headed: "*That Man!*" the phrase Hugh Porter had used and repeated with such great effect. This moment began Hugh's life, though he had had a hard boyhood and harder youth. He thought he had known struggling. He found out what struggling means before he had learnt from Harriet where he stood towards his body and towards the world. She had even in her extremity to use for the first time to him the words: "Take *my* advice." He had the wit to be wise. He had imagined, when he secured the wealthiest chapel in the Society, that the millennium for him had come; that he had now only to enjoy his income, have a library, go out to tea, embroil himself with all the quarrels of the laity under him, and be master in his own house and out of it. The time he gave to his sophistries, otherwise directed, might have made him half independent of Harriet; and than this he desired nothing more dearly. He wanted to love her and direct her. He aimed higher than he ever reached.

As it was, he held himself very quiet; it seemed Harriet did not make mistakes. The jealousies were not long appearing; the mutterings against ministers who interfere; the covert wonderings what he did with his income. It was hard for Hugh. His policy towards the members was not of his own invention; he carried it out mechanically, awkwardly; feared all the time it was right, the only policy. He

never refused invitations to preach out of his own circuit, by Harriet's advice. And let him not misunderstand: his sermons were to be staid, even dull, on no account sensational. He did as he was bidden. Reasons for all this? A dozen times he had almost asked: "And what then?" Well that he checked himself. As it happened, it never came to such a question, but how shocked Harriet would have been! How could she have told him what might be the Lord's inscrutable will?

Once, vague gratitude supplanting perplexity, he was nigh thanking her watchfulness. He put down his awful commentary, and pretended to yawn. Harriet looked up with anxiety. (She was making a pair of stays.)

"Well, my Hugh, what is it?" He sighed a little, and smiled. "My poor Hugh is looking tired."

"No, Harriet," he said sententiously, as though giving out a hymn, "not tired."

"Shall we talk then?" and with that dawned the most terrible hour Hugh had ever known; hour which set stormily, misty, and blurred with tears. In brief, he must resign, give up his chapel. He was stupid, mouth agog, when he caught the intention of her slow, hard sentences. She was mad; he said so, at last, after repeatedly checking the words on his lips. She gave no heed, made no answer; her calm no whit ruffled. He could not help himself; he thought it seriously. Through the torrents of his objections to each deliberate phrase he followed his thought: the possibility that she was a wild woman; like the mad, gifted with supernatural penetration.

Give up his "position"? Give up his thirty pounds a quarter?

"Oh, Hugh, Hugh!"

And their little house, so comfortable, with fitted blinds all through; to go to some miserable place in the country, perhaps! Useless to talk; he knew this fully ten minutes before he ceased to be coherent. The circuit was too large for him. His early years had been

passed in the country: it would do him good if he were sent back to it.

Nothing was said next day. It was a Wednesday; and a committee meeting after the service. Harriet did not wait for Hugh in the chapel as her custom was. She simply told him, as she gave him his comforter,[4] that she had something to do; must go home.

The committee meeting began as usual with a prayer by the eldest of the deacons. This ceremony passed drily. Hugh proceeded at once to run over the accounts; threw the book on the table as he finished. There was the shadow of a pause.

"And now, *gentlemen*," said Hugh, "I have something to tell you, something which lies so heavily on my heart that I shall be easier when I have told it: it seems the Lord's will that I should leave this circuit. The circuit is large, my health is far from good, and I do not flatter myself that you will have a great difficulty to fill my place. I hope you will be able to say, gentlemen, that I have been a good minister among you here present as deacons, and among you all as members." He finished, much moved.

"You are young, sir, to be our minister here . . . " began a younger deacon.

"Think it over a bit, sir," the *doyen*[5] broke in, roughly. "I propose a committee meeting this day week, while you think it over, sir."

"No, my brethren," said Hugh, more humanly. "It is thought over already. I did not come here myself; I did not seek to come here. He who sent me hither now sends me hence. If we are allowed to exercise our judgment, minister and members, in coming together, we must recognise His will above it all. I have to ask your permission to resign."

"Which we all refuse."

"No, brother, it need not take long; talk it over here and now. You will find me in the chapel when your decision is taken." He suited his action by leaving the vestry.

They accepted his resignation.

Hugh had a moment of satisfaction as he walked home. This hearty, blunt action of his came at the moment when a long-nursed grumble of his deacons was about finding vent. But his joy was not long-lived.

"I have resigned," said Hugh. "The circuit is large, I don't say too large, but they want mere age in their minister, these people."

For this announcement, he tried his uttermost to speak without expression, to leave Harriet in doubt whether he sulked or not. A touch of her fingers was all Harriet's reply; save that she was very motherly that night, appearing almost in a new aspect.

Hugh was sent to a small west-country village, or rather to two villages, four miles apart. The Porters found a roomy bright house for them, rented by the Society, with a certain quantity of solid furniture in it. They felt quite wealthy when they were installed. The only difficulty was the distances to travel. This was soon felt heavily, for Hugh began to be suffering and more delicate from the first week. He lost his spirits, his appetite; grew restless at night. Harriet kept her head through this trouble; she knew almost all it was necessary for her to know, to guard him and tend him well. But there remained between them want of familiarity. When his ailing was so far confirmed that he could look upon it as a definite and more or less permanent thing, Hugh became nervous on the subject lest Harriet might think he was malingering. She knew this anxiety of his; for once was baffled, not knowing how to reassure him.

Harriet urged her husband to take some pupils, to *amuse* him. Two boys were found, of eight and eleven. After a week Hugh refused to have anything to do with them. Harriet added to her tasks of feeding and grooming, that of training them. These boys turned out wonderfully well. Harriet saw each of them make a fortune in business.

Time came when Hugh left his wife for a whole week, to conduct a "revival" at Bristol. When he came back, a shed adjoining the house

had become a stable; the stable contained a mare. He gave himself over to surprise and delight. It so astonished him that Harriet had found such a smart, useful animal, that he forgot to ask what had been the price of her; and he never knew. The pleasure of his new plaything made Hugh seem his old self for a time. It was a joy to see him grooming the mare, spreading her litter, feeding her. At length, inevitably, came weariness of the work: the trouble of it spoilt the advantage and pleasure of riding; Harriet was forced into suggesting a man to take this duty off Hugh's hands. Henceforth a man was supposed to attend to the mare. Hugh never saw this man, nor did he ever make any inquiry concerning him. One thing remained, for nearly a twelvemonth at least: the distance between village and village was no excuse between Hugh and the fulfilment of his duties. Of course, this had to come in the end. It began with obstinacy to go to the neighbouring village on nights so awful that scarce ten souls would be assembled for his ministrations in the chill shed they called a chapel; that, too, at times when his cough was deep, shaking his poor body, so hidden inside the inches of woollens and cloth in which Harriet kept him swathed. Then clear, sheer laziness, variously disguised or perfectly frank. Harriet soon exhausted what few words of persuasion she could afford for such extremities, and passed without pause to acts. The occasion was repeated when Hugh was disinclined to go take his service, away over the heath. No word; Harriet was up to her room and down again in five minutes.

"Hugh, I shall be there before you," the thin woman's voice piped cheerily, and she was out of the house. A mile and a half of wet road, and Hugh passed her at a trot; she let the hoof-strokes die quite away, then, with unaltered brisk step, turned about towards their home; she had so much to do in the house!

So Hugh grew more and more a child as he aged and shrunk. This in his mere personal manliness, for to the outside he was more and more each year the image of the ideal Harriet had set for him, though all their life she had never so much as said to him: "I am ambitious

for you." In town or country pupils were always passing through his house to success in the ministry, in business, and professions. He edited Hugh Bourne, and had heard of Fox and William Law.[6] He composed test papers for sprouting divinity. Above all, he preached through the length and breadth of England; few preachers of the denomination were more sought. A wretched block, which the enterprising *Recorder* had had cut from a photograph of him, went the round of the Methodist press for years.

The Porters hardly took count of time. Their life together had been so long. The history of the world was narrowed for them into the span of their married life. Years were passing, though they seemed to stand still. Not only was Mrs. Porter grown the thinnest woman imaginable, and her thin voice incredibly thinner, and more quavering almost than a voice can be; but Sophy, Mrs. Porter's cousin, had become Miss Short, and staid at that.

It was at a period when, for the first time, she had the care of six pupils. Harriet dearly wanted a female in her house who was not a servant; some one worthy to receive her tradition, who in case of her death could look after Hugh, in all that phrase implied. She had cast about in her memory: her cousin Sophy must be fourteen; she gave days to reflecting on the girl's "breed" (Harriet believed in breed); felt sure in the end that, accidents apart, she could make something of Sophy. The child turned out, as she became a woman, the very finest bit of mortal clay Harriet had ever had the handling of; so quiet, so intractable; long-suffering, and so savage. Any impression made on such a character lasts. So Harriet thought, and was glad because of Sophy Short. There was always perfect accord between the two, but never, never peace; they were destined to be noble friends one day. Such a pupil for such a mistress!

The two women became a sort of society. They spoke so little except between themselves: they treated Hugh with such equal kindness that they were almost to him as one. Whatever he required

done either of them did, with the same readiness, the same silence, the same perfection. He gave up at length distinguishing their names, using them indifferently; they fell in with this arrangement. Hugh thought he had reached beautiful old age. He was very white. Wherever he went the fuss about him was extraordinary, even for so mild and ugly an old gentleman, and so renowned a preacher. The Juggernaut homages[7] he had been accustomed to receive for years (let us say this was the cause) had led him to make a collection of the most sickening clichés, to which he made an occasional addition, about "getting nearer the light," and the like, phrases which sounded like tinned Longfellow. Poor old Hugh! But in pulpits he was different. Once above the heads of a thousand listeners, he found old fire to recite old sermons. Harriet seldom heard him; for one reason that he rarely preached in his own circuit, where a grateful Society gave him more assistance than he required. When she did, she was prominent in the chapel, nodded vigorous approval, with more than punctuality, at each full period, constituting herself a silent claque.

"We shall not have Mr. Porter with us much longer," startled Sophy one quiet morning.

"What do you mean, Auntie?" asked Sophy angrily. "How can you be so stupid? How do you know?"

"Mark my words, dear, you will see."

"How do you know?"

"Mark my words."

It seemed a foolish prediction, for Hugh had never been better or livelier to Sophy's knowledge. She drew attention to this next day.

"That is just it," answered Harriet. "He is so active."

There was not a trace in her manner of any feeling other than satisfaction in her prophecy. Sophy was far less contented. After tea, when all three were sitting together, Hugh rose from his chair rather suddenly, and Sophy, on the watch, burst out at him:

"Don't be so active, Uncle, you make me cross."

Hugh was bewildered, but Harriet laughed:

"Don't mind her, my dear; she is growing old."

"Be more careful," Sophy persisted sullenly; "where's your skull-cap?"

Her prophecy came true quickly enough to surprise Harriet herself. The very morning following Hugh was not allowed to get up; congestion, pneumonia. The crowd at his burial was enormous. The grave-side encomiums were more sincere than grammatical.

"I have only to think now of following him," said Harriet. A large subscription to support her widowhood was raised in the Society.

Hugh had lain dead a whole week before burial, for certain reasons. Harriet was glad of this. Day after day the weather seemed so bad for Hugh to begin his sojourn under clay. Many a troubling phrase came from Harriet while he still lay upstairs; phrases the hearers excused, supposing them fruits of her excitement; troubling not in their sense but in the expression: Hugh among angels the subject, right and pious enough as a notion; but the thin old woman had a wild way of knowing what she spoke of. Hugh, bright and young and ransomed, in spiritual company. But the companions were not so feathered as sometimes seen, and their locality to Harriet was never vague or very distant. For her they were in the house or the little garden; or against the corpse in prayer. When they were in the drawing-room, Harriet spoke of them, though not in direct statement as in a definite part of the room; and talking currently and topically. Sophy and chance women lost patience at last, though they dared not show this. Their materialism was low and timid.

Against this (and the superficial may wonder), the corpse upstairs was still Hugh. When it had been buried it was still Hugh. Thrice, while he waited for burial, his grave costume was changed; finally he went to rest in a long scarlet flannel robe, a passionate Christian symbol the excuse, that he might be warmer and look more comfortable in the earth, but chiefly that Harriet might *see him better*. Hints

she dropped of this intention were far too obscure for Sophy to penetrate. None remembered that Silenus lived again in his granddaughter: the old idiot who had intercourse with his dead through the medium of medicine-bottles full of brandy. But Silenus was crazed; fancy broke its bounds in his brain, so that he was obliged, with stiff fingers, to unearth the drams, to see if the dead had drunk, to drink with them.

Harriet was quite ready to take up her life again the very hour Hugh was put in the dust. Sophy allowed the household work to be resumed next day. It passed much as usual, only interrupted by an occasional snivel of Sophy. Harriet loved facts. Sophy waited patiently for the old woman to return to such expressions as she had used during the week her husband lay dead—to criticise them, and admonish her; but she waited in vain. Only during that week had any one heard Harriet speak of the dead and glorified as she had then spoken; both before and since, all her utterances on such subjects were strictly theological, and very scanty. Her care was always for the maintenance or improvement of material surroundings. Here Sophy seconded her with staunch intention. The two women kept up their house as though its inmates were twice as numerous, with as much enthusiasm as though they were on the threshold of life. Indeed, now Hugh was out of the way, there needed no mystery about the turning out and scouring which he loathed. They might wash the chimney-pots everyday, and no one would scowl and whimper, and take to bed of *ennui*. Harriet had attained her very ideal of housewifery, only to find it hopelessly flawed by the fact that she could not do all herself. A failing frame fought her ravenous spirit of toil; for hours, literally straightened limbs forced her to idleness, while Sophy never sat down, never halted, the long day through: inventing epic tasks, lifetime tattings and microscopic patchworks, to employ the hours of lamplight. The only seeming solace Harriet had was that she might command idleness in Sophy; but how could she do that? Indeed, Sophy might refuse to obey her.

However, she took care to set aside, for the time when she was forced to sit down, certain employments to which repose was no barrier. Chief among these was the care of the "silver," the electro-plate she possessed. Her malice loved to see as much of the "silver" used as possible, on all occasions: dishes, covers, forks, spoons, toast-rack, cruets—such wealth of bright metal as Harriet thought well nigh incredible. It was a joy of joys to her to be surrounded with her "silver"; lovingly to clean and polish, and then wrap each object in white tissue-paper, just as they had been received from the shop. "What beautiful new spoons!" "New spoons," she would laugh, "well, they are not very old; I have had them fifteen years." With all the things in the house she valued it was the same. A great jealously lest Sophy should interfere with them for any purpose. It would be time enough for her to touch the precious things when they were her own. There was never any question on the subject; it was so well understood that Sophy inherited all the possessions. And not exactly inherit either; the goods, and that vague wealth in the funds, which she would have at Harriet's death, would come as a life's wages deferred. For this she had toiled, brain and hands, to the full of her powers, for the Porters. For this she had kept herself fast, never suffering a thought of marriage, for example, to loiter in her mind. She knew, latterly, as she grew to know Harriet somewhat, that her legacy would be considerable. She arrived queerly at this knowledge. Harriet made no secret of the "wage" understanding; she was finically just; and she set a higher value on *thorough* manual work than on most things.

It seemed near, too, now. Sophy waited from day to day to hear Harriet say, as she had said before: "I shall not be with you long." She had her angry answer ready, but it was never called for. So quickly as almost to be noticeable from one week to another, Harriet spent less and less of her day on her feet. Less and less too was she able to use her fingers. Her life drifted more every day towards one chair, one which had been her affectation somewhat, ever since Hugh was

taken away. Sophy thought she had always a strange look when sitting in it. It was true. Harriet loved, since she must be idle, to be idle in that chair. From it—for it was never moved—the light of the little sitting-room favoured her seeing what passed before her mind when she was reflective. She would pause sometimes in her work of cleaning the "silver," and sit with tea-pot and chamois leather quiet in her hands, and a fixed look in her eyes. She still persisted in cleaning the "silver"; but as she was able to take care of less, less was used.

When Harriet was in this almost cataleptic condition—and at last it was characteristic—all offers of ministration, and all inquiries from Sophy, were met with thanks and: "I am just thinking." Sophy would wait to see if anything would be added. But only a twinkling smile answered her curiosity, or a vague sentence cut short in the middle, changed presently to some matter of fact, to the valuables she would leave at her death: "You had better have all the silver replated, my dear; then it will last for years. And you must have the drawingroom clock cleaned. Don't be afraid to spend money having everything done up. Then it will be as though you were starting for yourself. I shall come back, perhaps, and see what you are doing; but *you won't see me.*" Then such a funny little laugh.

"Don't be so stupid, Auntie. It's nothing to laugh at."

Auntie thought she had the laugh, all the same. "Silver" and clocks and money in the funds she left Sophy; *the rest* she took with her, into the grave and out on the other side. Sophy would not see her; Sophy would not see anything but house-linen and spoons. Hugh had never seen anything; question if he saw much now; she saw him.

"Now, Sophy, I want you to do something for me," said Harriet. "Address an envelope to the manager of the bank." Sophy did this. Harriet slipped into the envelope a folded letter. "I want you to take this to the bank. Give it to one of the clerks and wait for an answer."

"You will be all right until I come back?" said Sophy; mere

courtesy, for Harriet wanted little most hours of the twenty-four. She went out into the scullery where a charwoman was *soiling* the flags, in the language of her irony, at two shillings a day, and sent her off. A cynical precaution; Harriet was practically helpless, and the woman might ransack the house. Then she went upstairs and dressed herself out in all the best she had. She had never felt so "silly" in her life; one moment excessively serious, as though she were going to take possession of the bank as a symbol of untold fortune; the next, as utterly conscious before the glass, posing her bonnet upon her flattened hair. She had never before worn *all* her best on a weekday. She went off to the bank without saying good-bye; so much did she realise the perfection of her appearance. The letter she carried contained only a blank sheet of paper.

At the slam of the street door, Harriet was alone in the house; alone with the accumulations of her life. She looked slowly round the little sitting-room, resting on each object with the same thought. The square table would be Sophy's, the round one too; the china in the corner cupboard, each piece of china singly. The cupboard itself was a possession. The canary in its cage before the window would be Sophy's, the maidenhair ferns and the variegated houseleek below it. All would be Sophy's, every visible object. Through the wall there, in the drawing-room, which she knew so well that the partition wall scarcely existed, the piano (which would have to be tuned), the inlaid sideboard, and the candlesticks and stuffed birds upon it, would be Sophy's. Hugh's presentation Bible would be hers; the rugs, the pictures on the walls, the curtains, the coal-box, the gilt-legged chair, all must be left behind. Sophy would have all. Down below her feet, through the floor, all the crockery on the dresser would be Sophy's. All the brass on the high black mantelshelf, the warming-pan hanging by the dresser, the commoner knives, the old clock, all the pots and crocks would be Sophy's. A mayor's dinner might be cooked in that kitchen. Upstairs, the great bedsteads, the presses full, crammed with linen, would be Sophy's. Whatever

happened, Sophy would never want linen. She herself would want one nightdress between her bones and her coffin: they would hide her neck with a napkin, and cover her feet with another; all in the common way. She left no directions on this point. The costume of the dead calls for loving invention. Sophy would not rise to this; she did not know.

All the silver in the cupboard beside her would be Sophy's, all wrapped in tissue-paper and safe inside baize-lined boxes. All would be Sophy's; the hassock under her feet, the chair in which she sat, the clothes she wore, the shawl about her head, her brooch, her mittens, her slippers. All tangible things in the house were nearly Sophy's own now; very nearly. What was all the house, with walls so thin and frail, as earthly substance is, that her poor eyesight was not stopped by them, pierced them like clear water or clear air? The lines of the room threatened to fade altogether at the bold thought. The lines of the window-frame wavered and curved; the horizontal arched, the perpendicular lines curved outwards as they dropped. It was not much she was leaving; perhaps she was not leaving much behind. Something, too, she took away. She had told Sophy where her will was, that there was money invested. There were other secrets she had not told her, which Sophy now would never know. Her limbs stiffened, or were senseless. She had no pain. Only the captivation of her eyes by the shapeless light through the window troubled her. It called to her, drew her eyes with magnetic power. Something rose in her throat; her eyes darkened; and Harriet was gone.

"Light"

The Pageant, 2 (1897), 113–134.

At the time Gray discovered the book of Jacopone da Todi's poems, in December 1893, he seems to have been on holiday in Edinburgh. A short time afterwards he began his translation of "O Love, all love above" (the holograph copy is dated 18 May 1894) which was to form the nucleus of his Spiritual Poems (1896). Jacopone da Todi was so much a spiritual mentor that Gray later used his name as his own in correspondence around the turn of the century.

As in "Niggard Truth," the opening initial in the 1897 printing is illuminated by an intricate interlace design (presumably by Shannon).

HE PAGEANT
EDITED BY
C. HAZELWOOD
SHANNON AND
J. W. GLEESON
WHITE
PUBLISHED BY
HENRY AND CO. AT THEIR
OFFICES 93 SAINT
MARTIN'S LANE
LONDON

MDCCC
XCVII

Light

HIS is the whole story, though it range over no more than a few months. The first forty odd years of this life are pure preliminary, obscurely and fatally composed, to the passage which marches nobly and passionately to an ecstatic end. Until this ecstasy broke across its decline, the heroine's life had so little to be revealed, even through the medium of most powerful lenses! She had lived her life in a neglected mode; to her, *sentiment* of life was only supplemented by *knowledge* of life, never supplanted by it. Like children, she derived support from accepting things as they are; trees which she had always remembered were to her as enduring as the sky; a fallen tree was something tragic. When she was a child, during the night of a terrible storm, a young man had been struck blind by lightning, and four old trees had been blown down. The blind man still desolated to her ear a certain stone passage with his 'Buy of the blind!' and she still called the two remaining elms the Seven Sisters. Here she had a group of impressions: on the one hand she was acquainted with the long-past facts, like anybody else of her age; on the other hand she had a *sentiment* of the thing, not fantastic, nor in any way connected with fear of lightning, in which it was at once ordinary and extraordinary. The government of the country, the queen, the town council, to her sentiment were like facts of nature; while her intelligence knew well enough why the sovereign reigns, that there might have been another sovereign or no sovereign, whence the members of Parliament and the Cabinet come, and the

different applications of revenue and parochial taxes. So also with, say, printed books and pictures. The author writes, the printer prints, the binder binds; but in that part of her where lay the undefined, but undisputed, convictions, a book as a determined object had an authority beyond any combination of the elements which produce it. In like manner a certain engraving she possessed of one of the Martin biblical subjects,[1] while it filled her with awe and admiration, had no value as a product of human invention, skill, and patience; the feeblest pencil drawing of a flower stood for more on this footing; perfect knowledge that the engraving was the result of thousands of dexterous scratches made no difference; even if she had seen the engraver bending over the plate with his goggle and gravers, she would not have connected his work permanently with a picture which had hung in the same place time out of memory. May this insistence upon the lifelong rivalry of simple heart and simple brain tend to indulgent appreciation of the heroine's conception of God, comparable to her sentimental notion of any settled fact; for though at this grave point her attitude approached that of most uneducated people, in her case it was in no way answerable to neglect or laziness.

Her husband was a smith; his daily work had been at the same factory ever since their marriage; his weekly wages had varied only within familiar limits. These conditions, in conjunction with her husband's meek disposition, would have secured the evenness of her married life, apart from her sanguine fatalism. The smith went to his work at an early hour of the morning. His dressing was finished completely in the bedroom, even to his top hat. Before starting he took a cup of coffee, which in summer was prepared by his wife, in winter by himself. When the smell of the pipe he lighted in the doorway reached her nostrils, his wife got up. This had been the strange signal all the time, which she had never happened to mention to him. She only heard him leave the house on days when he was a little poorly or the weather was bad, when she was fully awake and

listening; for, with an oiled lock, and by holding the knocker with one hand, he left with scarcely perceptible noise.

Until she took her breakfast she busied herself heartily with rougher work; after breakfast the bedroom was set in order, as also the part of the house through which her husband passed when he returned, from the door-handle to the kitchen stove. Next she prepared dinner, and while this was cooking she made her first toilette, rather tidying of her person. The smith came in at a quarter-past one, ate in silence for half an hour, and went away. After dinner her house work for the day was soon finished; she made her real toilette, and settled to needle work or reading, or went out. At a quarter-past six tea was eaten in the sitting-room, where husband and wife passed the evening until supper, for which meal they went to the kitchen again. Then the smith smoked his pipe, drowsed, his wife prepared his breakfast for the morrow, and the house was shut up for the night.

This was the outline of a typical ordinary day, as days had passed for twenty years. Sunday showed an important variation; it differed from the week-day in every one of its outward details.

On Sunday they rose later, breakfasted later; not only was breakfast different in character, but different plates, cups, and forks were used. The smith was pompous, reflective, in broadcloth and clean shirt, in the wearing of his oiled hair and embellishments struggling to realise the daguerreotype portrait of himself young. His wife also was contained, formal. The pair preserved on Sunday the attitude of courting days, stripped of tenderness. The smith left the house first, making for the distant Lemon Street Baptist Chapel. Another chapel of the same body was very much nearer, quite close in fact, in the opposite direction; he was a 'steward' of the chapel which took tithes of all his being. When he was gone (he banged the street-door on Sunday) his wife cleared breakfast away, as sedately as if her husband were still present; then she went to the poorer but more aristocratic

Bible Christian Chapel in Chapel Street, also very distant from the house, but the only colony of the sect in the town. Returning, she had reached home, and put the potatoes to simmer, before the smith reappeared; he stopped to gad on the way home; you could see it in the grimace of recognition, which his wrinkles were slow to relinquish.

After dinner the husband went again to his chapel; while his wife first did what was absolutely necessary to be done in the house, then read a little, then laid tea long before the time. (Almost every Sunday some one came to tea.) Lastly, with folded hands, she chaffered for her husband's return; real yearning for his presence possessed her. At tea, if strangers were present, the pair called each other Mrs. and Mr. Smith.

The Sunday evening was a notable weekly event with them; it offered so much strictly ordered variety. In their religious world, by a rough delimitation, the morning is applied to worship, the afternoon to the instruction of children, while the evening is a forlorn crumb for the need of the whole world outside the particular sect. (Sometimes a week-day evening is given up to projects of enlightenment of Parsees, Tierra del Fuegians, Buddhist monks[2]—heathen generally.) But that crumb, the Sunday evening service, gritty enough to the damned, is sweet in the tooth of the judges. In the morning man speaks to God; in the evening God, richly commented, to express it cautiously, speaks to man.

The smith's wife adored the Sunday evening service, partly from habit and training, partly in a childlike way; for it was narrative, anecdotal, variable. In addition it meant the occasional company of her husband. Every third Sunday evening he was free, and the two went together where they liked; on one of the two intervening Sundays they went to the husband's chapel and came back together, almost always much edified, in a mechanical way, by the warnings to the wicked which they had heard.

On a certain Sunday when the wife, in the order of things, was spending the evening alone, her husband said to her suddenly, not as usual, "Where are you going this evening?" but:

"Why don't you go to . . . "

"Newbury Park?" A voice inside her finished the sentence. It was very distinct, and, strangely, the reverberation seemed to come from her chest rather than from her head. The husband's question was:

"Why don't you go to Winter Street?" They called all the chapels by familiar names, like "the iron chapel," or by the name of a street.

"I was thinking of going to Newbury Park."

"It is so far," he persisted; "why don't you go to Winter Street? Captain Stocker (an inspired engineer officer with no chin) is going to preach. You like him . . ."

"I am inclined to go to Newbury Park." He did not answer, and she repeated:

"I want to go to Newbury Park." She was ashamed to explain her choice more narrowly.

"Oh, very well." They could get no nearer to a quarrel on such a subject, and to Newbury Park she went.

Not at all easy in her mind though. It was a dismal night, and the distance was so great. And then to have had words with her husband on a Sunday evening. Fatigued, and almost tearful, she came into the hot room she thought of as Newbury Park. Preliminaries of consecration of the proceedings past, the speaker, standing behind a little rostrum with his hands behind him, said, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee: Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

She knew these words just as well as the "Our Father" or "There is a green hill". . . . She had heard sermons, discourses, upon them beyond recollection. At another time she would have nodded the cadences of the phrase, her lips anticipating each word. Now the words loomed great and unfamiliar, as if memory or hearing were

out of focus; in a darkness, the negation of a stunning light, which yet seemed near. She saw the speaker grasp the front of the rostrum with both hands, stretch his arms stiff; she heard him repeat:

"Our Lord speaks: Verily, verily; truth of truth, unanswerable absolute truth; He says, I say unto *you*." He raised his right hand and dropped a threatening index, as a bravo might a revolver, straight at her. "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

A ray fell from distant heaven. Alighting in her, it exploded her soul into radiant, conscious being. In an instant, before the speaker had punctuated the sentence, so to speak, herself and the visible and invisible world were created anew. The flood was overpowering; a thousand biblical reminiscences; the creation of the world, sacrifices, voices and fire from heaven, whole psalms with every word and letter distinct in idea, were present in a flash. She was afraid and consoled at once. With the desire to scream came the comfortable words: I am here. She had seen women swoon, have hysterics, in chapel. It had never happened to herself. There was no danger now; the body had no time to exclaim as it went down under the victory of spirit. Panorama veiled panorama with incredible rapidity, and side issues came and went too at the same time, scraps of conversation years and years ago, visions of streets, forgotten faces, trivial occasions and incidents; a great deduction emanating all the time, the life of our Lord in minute detail, from babyhood with all its incidents (of which she had no practical knowledge) to the terrors of Calvary. Not stopping here, for the new creature she was for the moment knew no fear or hesitation; she followed His being boldly from the lips of His wounded, tortured body to the ecstatic arms of His Father.

Such was the preliminary trial of the course she had now to run.

She began immediately to foot the glorious path. She began to pray; but her prayer had no words, no known aim; she prayed for things she had never heard of, and in a language she did not know.

The light she threw round her gave visible objects an unaccustomed, alluring interest: a sin at the first step, which was followed instantly by forgiveness and reconciliation. The Light within her was the object, the object of objects.

The Light said, in words of music and light, "He giveth His beloved sleep," and a veil was drawn across the ecstasy.

When she reached home she had not the faintest excuse to make any confidence to her husband of what had taken place. Indeed, how could she possibly communicate it? She had no terms in which to express the new birth even to herself.

The Monday morning rose as pale as any other. There seemed no prospect of a return of the ecstasy. The repetition of the words which had induced it was unavailing. Only the universe was still rational to her, as in the moment of revelation; it stood no longer simply a fact, dull, uniform, unexplained; the living parts of it were very much alive, the dead not worth a thought. And the Lord of Life lived in her; she knew that; there could be no mistake about that.

She began to pray; a long communion with the Light by faith; for it was not evident. But now her prayer was in mortal phrases of human speech; a tempestuous, chaotic prayer, though with no movement of the lips, no activity of the brain; it throbbed, as before, from her chest. It was a long narrative, with supposed rejoinders, interruptions. It often repeated itself; it was full of cross purposes. Some parts of it were in a lower tone, parts so low as to be next to silence; at last, in a dead hush, the request escaped her: "Speak to me." Then a full swell ensued, gigantic soliloquy, in a small degree comparable to incidents of the great interview, a half memory that, in the mystic prayer, the soul to soul speech, a desperate entreaty had been made; that she might know the bliss of faith, never again receive revelation or smallest encouragement; that she might live like Him, die like Him, forsaken by Him, with no sight of His face, no sound of His voice. Had He put in her heart a prayer so exalted? She knew,

with angelic perception, how great this prayer was. She framed such a prayer instantly; she knew that He looked for courage in her: "Try me, test me, give me suffering, neglect me; give me grace to love in absence, for present, how could I do else?"

She shook through all her body like some one awakened from sleep, saw the visible objects of the kitchen, the work which engaged her hands; she found, with a light surprise, that she had been busy all the time.

The dinner was excellent. The smith almost overstayed the twenty-five minutes he had; his wife was so cheerful, so smiling, so clean personally. He took for granted, as well he might, that this was a favourable combination of ordinary circumstances. Not at all; it was an ordinary aspect of a new order of things. Those who know even a little of heaven usually know a great deal about earth; and here was no exception. To see the world with washed eyes, everyday matters and objects, to distinguish their classes, means to handle the matter which concerns one with dignity and discretion.

This woman had been, let us say, from the point of view of a high standard, fairly cheerful, demure, restful to the working man, who was nearly always tired when he saw her. But why should duty to a husband in this sense depend upon accidents of nature and circumstances? She put and answered this question. Also in the preparation of food and the cleansing of crockery and accessories. *Intention* can add something to perfect mechanical execution. An utensil cleansed in the highest name must be abundantly clean, lavishly brilliant. To scour potatoes as though they were all alike and little different from other roots, to leave them in hot water so long, steam them so long, and then fling them at the eater; slaves for slaves might act thus. Coming to conclusions such as these under the image of incensing the Divine, who Himself swung the censer, an unlearned woman, who had handled very few books in her life, was primed to confound many a doctor.[3]

For something more than two weeks a state of being showed little variation from one day to another. Exalted faith in the Divine Presence hourly renewed, either at the occasion of reconciliation after slips, neglects, moments in which something stood before the Light; or by simple, formal pact. She agreed to ask nothing but at the Divine dictation, to expect nothing, not to be inquisitive or impatient; above all, to keep the union a secret, to hold infinite stability as jealously as though it were a bubble. So, while every day changed from point to point like the colours of an opal, an infinity of differently coloured sparks, though storm and hush succeeded, contrition and ecstasy, before his very eyes, the smith saw not the weakest ripple in his wife's placid and perfect demeanour.

To return a moment to her everyday conduct of life, she was scrupulous to dress, to keep herself, as the warden of an idea, as the shell in which it lay active and sleepless, hidden.

One morning the interminable conversation had dropped to an even mildness; the answers to her whispered confidences seemed to grow faint—almost inaudible. An alarm came upon her, and under the strange condition, in the language she did not know. It would not be beaten away. Calm retreated into the depths of a distance such as she had never before beheld, and a rough voice bellowed through all the vacuum:

"Halt!" She held her breath, firm amidst immensity of loneliness unknown to sand, or sea, or sky.

"Doubt!" added the voice, with long-drawn insistence; and a hail of questions rushed vertical upon her, driving her down, down. What was she? whence? who? where were her titles? The Light she housed, what was it? it? it? Why it? What was its form? Was it a person? What person? Did it really speak? Did it speak truth? Descent must be arrested before she could answer, but that was impossible, till faith spread arms beneath her, and in seas of down and spice, in a world of light fluttering into song hushed at the moment of

utterance, all her being melted into those conditions, and the familiar voice said with unfamiliar tenderness, "My Beloved is mine, and I am His."

"No, no," she cried, "I am afraid." The sound of her voice brought her within the narrow walls of the kitchen with a jar. She sat down and wept for a long time without thought.

The paroxysm coincided with the smith's return to dinner. His wife stared at the clock until her face was as candid as its own, and the key sounded in the latch. She had a severe cold at this time, hence her husband took little heed of her swollen appearance. He, for his part, was sullen, unsympathetic. The perfection of material surroundings had begun to prey upon him. His ideal of life was of a balance of give and take; he knew so well in his work how a good job foreshadows a bad; and while he relished new comfort, he already smarted under a deprivation. Ah, man, man; the lentils of captivity were sweet in his memory at the table of joy!

He finished his dinner and went away, but the darkness of his presence remained behind, filling all the part of the house through which he had passed. She cleared the meal. The platters returned noiselessly to the dresser, brighter than they had left it. "Give me sorrow," she prayed; "give me desertion, longing. Ah, I have longing; I long, I long." She went to the bedroom, dressed herself, came down, and went out. She took no note of the direction: the invisible Guide had all the care of that. Her way lay across the adjoining heath; then by a turn she retraced her steps. Her eye rested here and there on scrub and struggling growth, always in the name with which every leaf was signed. It came into her fancy that she would like to see the sea which He had made. Instantly, like a child to be humoured, she saw the great expanse of the water with noble vision, shoreward and seaward at once, and the delicate contact of its rim with the fringe of the sky. Then, changing a little, the horizon was more distant; it seemed the same sea, but there was so much more of it; it was the

face of waters clinging to the confines of a larger planet. The stars too, for these appeared, fell into unusual patterns. Occupied with the vision, she gradually descended into the town. She went on, absorbed in her prayer, crestfallen and timid, delighted to take a low place before Him; when she turned her head, as though she had heard her name, and saw in a stationer's window the words emblazoned: "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." The sight of the words certainly awoke a profusion of memories; not so many but that she noted clearly the position of the card, the manner in which it was entrenched among piles of book backs. The card reminded her that she wished to buy something of the linendraper a few shops on. It is difficult to see how it should have reminded her, unless it was the denial of the wish to buy this card. How can you hang up your birth? or whilst you live in it, why should you write up in your room the information that you were once born?

For some time communion, though tender, delicious, uninterrupted, took place on a lower level. It was the expression on her part of deep contrition; ever a new wound meekly, weakly, presented for healing. With the consciousness that the subject was less exalted than sometimes, there was no notion in her mind of comparison, for deepest anguish was ecstasy beyond thought. The very vagueness of her attitude was soothing, a reward, delight that she was permitted to know the divine union by faith. On a certain night she dreamed (it is fit to state that she never dreamed of the Divine Lover, and little at any time). She dreamed that she arrived in a square in a large town. A garden was in the midst of it, and it was inclosed by large, gaudy buildings lighted up, though it was day. She made her way to one corner of the square where there was a book shop, over which was a poem written in gold letters. The poem had eight lines; four which rhymed correctly, and in continuation four others, not rhymed, which seemed to dwindle away. In her dream this had a deep meaning, but she only retained the concluding words:

> . . . it was a wondrous thing
> To be so loved.[4]

In the window of the shop was the card she had seen in the stationer's window, bearing the words, "Except a man" . . . at least so she took for granted, for she did not distinguish them. Turning round she saw that the square had an Oriental aspect; then the dream became stupid, then unpleasant; a pungent smell pervaded it. She woke suddenly to the fact that it was tobacco; she heard the soft click of the street door. Running over the circumstances of the vivid dream, she had the staunchness to reject it as of no consequence. She looked upon the time it took to examine it as time wasted, and turned joyfully to address Him who never sleeps. It was He who began:

"If I should not be who you think I am, would you love Me?"

"That I would," she answered fervently and without hesitation.

"And if you make a mistake, and were to be damned?"

"I should still be grateful."

"You do not know."

"You have given me knowledge above all knowledge." And the silent utterance of her soul grew voluble, universal, a torrent of reckless thanks and prayer. Thanks for what she had never possessed, prayers for what she already enjoyed. She offered thanks for her existence, that she was her very self, that she was a *woman*. The Lord had been born of a *woman*. She could understand a little what it must have been to be the holy mother of God. This notion was very new to her, quite new; but that caused her no surprise, for everything was new.

There was a peculiar bliss in the thought. She came to it again and again. When she had pursued it to the end of one set of considerations it returned afresh and afresh. The morning passed with astounding rapidity—the contrary phenomenon was commoner—but

nothing was belated. The dinner was as punctually served to the minute as though she had watched the clock anxiously all the time.

The habit of divine communication had long since become continual. She was able to maintain it through the most complicated demands upon her attention. Her ordinary life presented few alterations to view, her ordinary manner, her ordinary appearance. A greater solicitude might have been noted. Her clothing was really very different from what it had been, but the changes were so dexterous as to be scarcely perceptible. It cannot be denied, too, that as soon as the traces of dinner had been removed she hastened to put on the best clothes she allowed herself to wear on a weekday.

It had become necessary that she should go to a London shop, one of those warehouses where everything is to be bought. This periodical visit was always made in the same way. She hurried off immediately after dinner. From Charing Cross, which she reached by rail, she walked across Charing Cross Road and Leicester Square to Piccadilly Circus,[5] whence she took an omnibus to her destination. Her shopping over, she came back by a different omnibus to the railway station. On the present occasion she laughed to recognise in Leicester Square the scene of her dream, in the Alhambra Theatre[6] the Oriental colouring of it. Sure enough, too, in the north-west corner of it, was the book-shop, but the name of the proprietor stood where the poem had been cramped in her dream. In the window, by a coincidence, a white card was visible in exactly the position which the text had occupied. Rejection of the dream gave way to this extent, that she crossed the road to find out what it was. The back and side of a book were exposed, and before it was a written label: "Just published: *The Excellent Way*,"[7] and some further particulars. She wanted the book, though the idea was preposterous; she had never in her life paid even two shillings for a book; this one surely cost more. There was no time for dallying; her errand pressed. She went into the shop, and the book lay dazzling on the dark counter before her. The shopman, amused at her shyness, her unwillingness to touch

it, exposed the back, the sides, opened at the title-page. She saw there was a picture. The desire to possess the book grew. The shopman dropped the leaves casually through his fingers. She saw the words: "Lord, if thou art not present." . . . "Ten-and-six,"[8] said the man; "it is beautifully printed, beautifully got up." She thought that did not prove much, but she repeated with alarm: "Ten-and-six!" The leaves splashed over each other. Seeing again the words she had seen before, she hurriedly closed, gave gold and silver for brown paper, string, and a possibility. In the omnibus she opened the parcel and peeped into the book.

Popery! and she wrapped it up again as well as she could.

At the store, in the tea-room where she went, according to her custom, to get breath and take a little refreshment, she could not resist taking another look at the book she carried. This time she patiently sought out the poem which had first arrested her eye.

> Lord, if thou art not present, where shall I
> Seek thee the absent . . .[9]

It was very disheartening; it did not speak to her at all. She could not find words in which to reproach herself with her folly. After a few moments of such reflection, ill at ease with her conclusion, she took yet another dip and alighted on a page where a sonnet began:

> Before myself I tremble, all my members quake
> When lips and nose I mark, and both the hollow caves . . . .[10]

It was hopeless; she shut the book resolutely with the sudden determination to return it. With this intention she took her departure and hurried to the book-shop, which, when she reached it, was closed.

The train had little comfort for her. Only when she was some few minutes on the road did she remember that the loved communion had been interrupted just as long as this unfortunate book had been

in her possession. She hastened to repair the deprivation; and though her wish did not remain entirely without response, the book beside her was a drag by its presence. She had thoughts at one moment of throwing it out of the window.

Reaching home, the book had to be smuggled into the house. The difficulty of this accomplishment, not to mention the danger, was something very like a blow to the poor owner. There was no possible question as to whether her husband could be let see it or not; accordingly it was necessary to enter the house quickly and noiselessly, to deposit the book nimbly upon one of the dark stairs while she went into the sitting-room to give an account of her journey and soothe the anger of the smith, which she could count upon—anger at her forced absence, though it was surely as much upon his account as upon her own; then she must snatch the packet dexterously as she went up to take off her coat and bonnet, and hide it effectually before she could be followed. It had to be done and she did it. She was very weak next morning through lying awake devouring her tears.

To allay the agony of her doubt, the difficulty of return to the divine communion, her first determination was to put the book out of sight and leave it there. This turned out so little satisfactory as a salve that she changed tactic, and, withdrawing it from its lurking-place, she cut the leaves and began to read it straight through, disregarding the shocks to her accustomed beliefs which occurred ten times on every page. Her determination was so strong still when she had penetrated a few pages that she found herself spelling out the name of she did not know whom: Blessed Jacopone da Todi,[11] not skipping this, to her, unnecessary preliminary to the perusal of the poem following it, which answered her unconscious glance with better promise than any of the preceding had vouchsafed. Ah! dear Lord, Light in dark places indeed. The first line she read set all her doubts at rest. Joy filled all her being, she did not know why; but such was the perfection of joy to her, when she could not trace it to any earthly origin. She could not have declared that she understood

fifty per cent. of the words under her eye, but she was sure in the awakened part of her that here was something for her. What did she care now about the origin of the book, for what petty or even wicked purpose it might have been put together? She knew enough to be certain that He uses all things, all means, for His good pleasure. Until she could look into His face, follow with her own eyes the moving lines of His lips as they move in speech, she must be content to hear His voice where it is to be heard.

> O Love, all love above!
> Why hast thou struck me so?
> All my heart broke atwo,
> Consumed with flames of love,
> Burning and flaming cannot find solace;
> It cannot fly from torment, being bound;
> Like wax amid live coal it melts apace.
> It languishes alive, no help being found.[12]

And so forth. The words had no special reference to her own condition at the time, probably none at all; yet such was the force of this unlooked-for revelation, she knew once for all and at the first glance that these words were meant for her. Even had she been told that Blessed Jacopone was a minor brother, and had she been told at the same time what a minor brother was, it would have made no difference to her. From the afternoon when she was made free of the ancient Italian poem, the father of so much of the best that has followed it, she gave it her attention until she knew it all by heart, and could again put away the book containing it, for she cut no more pages.

With no more power to define a symbol than a baby, she knew very well from the outset, and practically, that all visible nature, and more especially the Word of God (that is the Bible) are intelligible only in the manner of symbol; that all appearances, all divine

utterances, portray something beyond, which in turn is the emblem of some remoter truth—reality. She was fully convinced that the various recorded and unrecorded acts of Christ, the incidents of the life He passed on earth, are continually re-enacted for the furtherance of His kingdom, and the nourishment of the souls of His. This belief, perhaps it is proper to add, was held only on the authority of Christ; it had no further support. She knew that the way of illumination has either to be trod without fear or left alone. There must be courage to meet and face Apollyon,[13] but how much more courage does it need to listen to the voice of the Beloved!

Let it then be stated categorically (where the smith's wife had been convinced in one point of time) that she had not shunned a conclusion which had been forced upon her: Christ had once been born of woman miraculously; that momentous event had had its direct value, the physical redemption of man and fallen nature; but beyond this was there not something else? It is a matter of vulgar knowledge that the great sacrifice is infinitely more far-reaching in its effect. As our Lord then was born of His mortal mother in mortal flesh, so is He conceived mystically in every one of His chosen, and born spiritually, but not less truly. The act too is reciprocal, and the ramifications of the mystery extend no doubt till limitless space is filled with the glory of God.

On an afternoon, at the accustomed hour, the smith reached his house, and hearing no sound to indicate the presence of his wife within doors, walked into the sitting-room to verify her absence. She was sitting in the usual chair, with her head bowed and her hands crossed in a strange attitude upon her breast. He asked her what she was doing, but all the answer he received was a deprecating wave of her hand. He placed himself before her, intercepting the light of the window, and there stood stock still. Presently she lifted her hands with the palms towards him, and then stooped the whole upper part of her frame until her forehead almost touched her knees. Raising

her face then, her lips, which were very white, moved rapidly without sound, presently breaking into cadences:

> Against me let no blame henceforth be held
> If such a love confoundeth all my wit . . .

She brushed her hands across her eyes, shook her head, and smiled recognition to her husband.

The following day their doctor called in the afternoon, quite accidentally. He explained his visit as accident, adding some professional jest. He stayed almost an hour, and then, a strange request, asked for some tea. The smith's wife, quietly flattered, prepared a cup of tea, and they resumed their conversation. The doctor snatched greedily at any seeming opportunity of talking upon religious subjects; but she would not be enticed, and at length he went away. When the smith returned, his wife told him of the visit; he affected surprise, though he had just seen the doctor, and heard from him the following opinion on the health of his wife: "Take care of your wife, you will not have her much longer; I cannot discover anything wrong with her!"

There was a great peace over life for a day or two, a rest from ecstasy as sweet or sweeter. Then, sweeter yet, suddenly the renewal, the "light without pause or bound," of the poem. To light the world from one's own body, to bear the Light within one, to be the genetrix—it surpassed reason.

> Not iron nor the fire can separate
> Or sunder those whom love doth so unite;
> Not suffering nor death can reach the state
> To which my soul is ravished; from its height
> Beneath it, lo! it sees all things create;
> It dominates the range of dimmest sight . . .

She gave way completely to the fact. The conviction that she truly

bore within her her august Familiar was so profound that she grew to the pain of regret that the course of nature must obtain, and that, the day and hour accomplished, she must part with the mystical burden and enter into a new relationship. So jealous did she become that a notion one would think she could not escape did not enter her thought; that, namely, of comparing her legal husband to Saint Joseph. The truth is that her grasp of the existing situation was on a very high level of mystery. As to her part in it, she held it almost as a person without sex, the necessary condition of her entering it once overpast.

Transformed in Him, almost the very Christ;
One with her God, she is almost divine;
Riches above all riches to be priced,
All that is Christ's is hers, and she is queen.
How can I still be sad, despair-enticed,
Or ask for medicine to cure my spleen?
The fetid sweet from sin,
With sweetness overspread,
The old forgot and dead
In the new reign of Love.

The tone of complaint in the poem of Jacopone, though it had no meaning in her experience, did not raise the smallest question in her. She knew the treasure of sense within the terms employed. The joy was so intense that it seemed to her quite natural that another should express it, or try to express it, in the language of pain and dismay. In her prayers she was just as likely to pour out volumes of expostulation and injury, frantic and unseemly tenderness, sheer incoherency. In one passage the poem runs:

Thou canst not shield Thyself from love, love brought
Thee captive by the road from heaven to earth;
Love brought Thee down to lowness, to be naught,

To roam rejected from Thy humble birth.
No house nor field enhanced Thy lowly lot;
Poor, Thou hast given riches and great worth.
In life, in death, no dearth
Of love hast Thou declared;
Thy heart hath flamed and flared
With nothing else but love.

This was strong food, and it was devoured greedily. The aliment must be nothing but love:

"Thou wast not flesh," Jacopone makes Saint Francis[14] break out at the Divine Lover in the passion of his rebuke:

Thou wast not flesh, but love, in frame and brain;
Love made Thee man to bear our sin's reward.
Thy love required the cross, the world's disdain . . . .

All through, the phrases of the great Italian song filled her with terrible bliss, ecstatic terror. When an anxiety did not of itself come into her mind, the poem readily suggested it. Her own temper would have been most likely to have sucked the present sweetness, but the untractable companion of Saint Francis would not have it thus. He is full of apprehension. If this little love which, now, at the outset, is vouchsafed to me, so fills all my being, taxes all my strength, how shall I possibly endure the distention when it grows great, as grow it must? The smith's wife saw the force of this question in a manner outside Jacopone's anticipation.

Disregarding dates, hours, lapses of time (she gave little heed; the Lover dictated season to her and time of day; it was day or night for her at His bidding, spring or autumn), the time was nigh for the mysterious birth. It rushed upon her suddenly; there seemed only a few minutes given her in which to prepare the setting of the astounding miracle. The historical circumstances were present to her in a flash, she knew not whence; but the whole incident, the actual

details, had to be animated. She moved about quietly under the sorest stress she had ever known, while the agitated soul of her seemed to be traversing space in all directions in the fervour of the moment; she was muttering to herself over and over again:

> In such a deadly swound,
> Alas! where am I brought?

Johann Scheffler[15] has shown the nativity in sentences of tenderness which human speech has poor hope ever to excel, so frail that they cannot be stirred from the tongue in which they were first set; Friedrich Spe[16] has expressed physical contact with Christ in words which swoon upon his lips; the English language holds the pomp and glory of song in Crashaw's poem on the circumcision.[17] If these three masters could be distilled into one and their concentrated sweetness impinged direct upon a sensitive heart, the victim might present a parallel to the overwhelmed blacksmith's wife, fallen the most pitiable heap of flesh. The lamentable workman, the words of the doctor fresh in his brain (they had gnawed through into every fibre of it) lifted his wife in his grimed arms; lifted her, a strange contradiction of terms, into depths. It cannot be told from what vision he aroused her.

It was frightening to a poor man like the blacksmith to see his wife consent to be put to bed without a murmur of protest. Even had she been evidently suffering he would have expected her to deny that anything was the matter with her, and certainly to refuse to go to bed. To every inquiry she returned the same blissful smile, of such candid reassurance that those about her could not believe that she suffered. The news of the mysterious ailment (which was to end in death) ran down the street, and unaccustomed women gathered at the clean bedside, and there remained.

She now lived in the heights. She had now, as she thought, transcended all; it had been a long fight to break with such clearly justifiable habit as that which kept her the slave of the calls of her

house. But love, great love had made wreck of all; love, tyrannical, had broken down the flesh, even in its purest strongholds:

> I have no longer eyes for forms of creatures,
> I cry to Him Who doth alone endure;
> Though earth and heaven exhaust their varied natures,
> Through love their forms are thin and nowise sure;
> When I had looked upon His splendid features,
> Light of the sun itself was grown obscure.
> Cherubim, rare and pure
> By knowledge and high thought,
> The seraphin, are naught
> To him who looks on love.

She no longer waked and slept; night and day alike passed in calm ecstasy. The Beloved could not leave her any more. Seen by none of the busybodies at her bedside, she held at will and laid aside within easy reach the divine Presence come to her with the loving confidence He had Himself taught her. Locality had ceased to have that vital importance which it once had; great sense of her individuality remained, and stronger still was the personality of the divine Lover. She knew (for ecstasy brought with it supreme knowledge) that her body lay in sheets, supposed to be lingering and ailing; that it was given over to the care of hands she knew, to which she gave no heed. She knew that her kitchen stood untended by its proper guardian; but love was grown terrible now, she dared not deny it lest is should crush the universe in despite. The officious woman in the room would bend her ear to the smiling lips when they moved, to hear, low and sweet and distinct:

> Love, Love, how Thou hast dealt a bitter wound!
> I cry for nothing now but love alone.
> Love, Love, to Thee I am securely bound;

I can embrace none other than my own.
Love, Love, so strongly hast Thou wrapt me round,
My heart by love forever overthrown,
For love I am full prone.
Love, but to be with Thee!
O Love, in mercy be
My death, my death of love!

"She is raving!" But no change of expression answered the opinion, though it was distinctly heard and understood.

On a given day the number of people passing to and fro began to increase. The fire was kept more brisk. There was noiseless hurry going on. She knew quite well that they were preparing for her death. An extra pillow was put behind her, and not half an hour elapsed before another was added. Then one beckoned another outside the room, and she supposed that the smith had been sent for. Not long afterwards, in fact, he arrived. As he came into the room her lips began to move again.

"She is raving!" the leading attendant volunteered, not for the first time that morning. Though the smith had not heard it before, he rejected the hypothesis with a gesture of disdain. The fact was, that the dignity of his wife's appearance filled him with vanity. Not those, he thought of the women who stood round like birds of prey, none of those is my wife, but the serene woman propped up with pillows, who is already half in heaven, on whom I shall set my eyes only once or twice more. He bent to her face, and heard here and there as a syllable was accented:

To Love forever wed,
Love hath united both
Our hearts in perfect troth
Of everlasting love.

"Her head is as clear as mine," he said scornfully; "she's no more raving than you are."

"What's she say?" asked the woman, awed.

"I can't say it like her."

"She's going."

"Lower her head," whispered one. The smith looked savage, as though he would defend her from molestation with violence. The women continued to mutter what ought to be done.

She motioned to raise her hands; the smith took one of them; her lips moved:

> Love, Love, O Jesus, I have reached the port;
> Love, Love, O Jesus, whither . . .

"Aubrey Beardsley"

La Revue Blanche, 16 (1898), 68–70.

This translation from the French is by Alan Anderson, published as Aubrey Beardsley: An Obituary Memoir (Edinburgh: privately printed, 1980).

After he was dismissed as art editor of The Yellow Book in the spring of 1895, Beardsley was supported by commissions, and later by a regular allowance, from André Raffalovich. Raffalovich's concern also extended to Beardsley's spiritual well-being and, following his own conversion from Judaism to Catholicism, Raffalovich, together with Gray, encouraged Beardsley's own conversion (to the extent that it has been interpreted by at least one biographer, Stanley Weintraub, as actual pressure to convert). Beardsley did finally become a Roman Catholic on 30 March 1897, almost exactly a year before his death.

Given these circumstances, one would think that Gray would be concerned in this obituary memoir to offer an apologia for Beardsley's life. In fact Gray flatly denied Beardsley's reputation as an immoral artist: "All that he was, all that he did, was good," he asserts, attempting to forestall the kind of criticism later voiced by Roger Fry, who called Beardsley the "Fra Angelico of Satanism." Gray's remarkable objectivity later was to extend to another controversial artist in black and white, Eric Gill.

La Revue Blanche was edited by the three Natanson brothers, of whom Gray's acquaintance, Thadée, was the best known. But it was its most famous literary editor, Gray's friend Félix Fénéon, who invited him to write for the journal, the most brilliant and original of the Parisian periodicals of the day. Under Fénéon, it attracted the best of the avant-garde writers and artists, one of whom, Félix Vallotton, provided a small woodcut of Beardsley's profile for this short memoir.

Aubrey Beardsley

N artist has just died. Aubrey Beardsley was born in London about twenty-five years ago: he died in Menton on 15th March last. This was, in England, the occasion for fresh insults and for foolish forgiveness.

Fifteen months ago, in Bournemouth, he was thought to be dying: his whole appearance condemned him. Nevertheless he kept repeating: If I went to Paris, I would recover. After arriving by some miracle at the Quai Voltaire, his expectations seemed to be realised. He made a recovery. One went to see him: numbers of people frequented his sickroom and spread hope there. For a short time even he regained the strength to handle his industrious pen.

For he loved Paris in a direct and special way. All that he observed there with such clarity, he set down. He had an extraordinarily precise vision. And with this gift he wanted to be able to single out the most delicate lines as far as the eye could reach; which, in London at least, is difficult.

One finds in the force of his inclinations an assurance of his genius. This was a man who never hesitated: for all his delicate appearance and awkward gestures, he had the stamp of a great man. All that he was, all that he did, was good. He laid down his views. And, for him, the matter was settled, decided once for all.

Always satisfied with himself, he had little curiosity; he confessed artlessly to astonishing ignorance.

He detested the vague, the blurred, all that is mysterious. The most beautiful stained glass windows, even the delicate hues of ancient

rainbowed glass, left him unmoved. In literature, he leapt at a bound from the age of Augustus (see his moving translation of the *Ave atque vale* of Catullus)[1] to the French writers of the 17th century. His meat and drink was what offered itself to him, without favour.

Even as a child Beardsley displayed an extraordinary gift for music.

He was sought after in drawing-rooms. At the age of twelve the young Aubrey had to give up his fame as a pianist to go to school, to become a student, and to suffer the misfortune of bearing a name that his companions could find absurd.

Eight years later, an astonishing flowering.[2] In an instant he was famous. Music-hall writers adorned their verses with his name. Publishers anxious to make a fortune proffered their attentions. Women's dress conformed to his wish. Wagnerian concerts were thronged with his characters. As for himself, he did nothing but draw, unmoved, and was none other than Aubrey Beardsley.

Theories followed; in the end he was *explained*. For some he was a monster with a contrary vision: what was meant, for example, by his fauns dressed in lace? his hideous women firmly convinced of their charm, or beauties with a tranquil and unpitying air? According to others, he had to wait, to possess himself in patience. Beardsley would begin to learn the way of the world; before long, weary of shocking good people, his whimsical imagination would be exhausted, and he would draw like everyone else; he would show himself at last responsible.

Responsible! What did they want, his judges, his admirers? His seriousness was in fact precisely to mock, but in a kindly way, without malice. One would wait long for something else from him.

He found his models by chance, viewing them in his own fashion; and when he did not wish to inconvenience himself, he took himself as a model. So much for the idiotic decipherings of his symbols.

His *Death of Pierrot* has been called a 'melancholy biography'; and so, similarly, other compositions of his. Undoubtedly, the dying

Pierrot is Beardsley; and in the group of people who tiptoe near to the bed, finger on lips, he has quite simply turned to the advantage of his art the half gestures and the hidden compassion that a discerning invalid is aware of chancing upon around him. But it is the symbol itself which interests the artist, and not what is symbolised.

In the nine pages of illustrations which he made for Alexander Pope's *The Rape of the Lock* (pages moreover of the first rank among his best) all weaves its spell (is it necessary to remark the eminent distinction of every line that he drew?), all is fitting, as it should be, and in keeping. It is not that a sense of responsibility finally reveals itself; it is rather that the innocent, quintessential ridicule was already present in the poem.

Beardsley's work is scattered everywhere: in the journals of *The Savoy* and *The Yellow Book*,[3] and in a number of published books. There is also, published by Smithers, a collection of fifty drawings, which contains moreover a catalogue of his pictures, drawn up after a fashion.[4]

A year ago, he had himself baptised. His character promptly showed itself in the eager study which he made of Bossuet[5] and of Saint Alfonso de Liguori.[6] He loved the prayers of Saint Thomas Aquinas.

Since his arrival in Menton, during the autumn of 1897, his reputation for sweetness and resignation spread. And during the martyrdom of his last eight days, those days of choking blood coughed up in torrents, and of painful attempts to cure, the colony of consumptives, through the medium of the priest who confessed him, sent for rosaries similar to his own and said their prayers as fashionable people do.

"God–made and Machine–made"

Blackfriars, 5 (November 1924), 451–457.

Blackfriars was founded in 1921 and published in Oxford by Basil Blackwell as the voice of the English Dominican Order, to which Gray was affiliated as a Third Order (or lay) brother.

In this, his initial contribution, Gray takes issue with the tyranny of the standard article, arguing that, while machinery actually enhances man's humanity, man should in turn enhance the machine-made product with those "artistic" touches that made the handmade article individual and memorable.

God–made and Machine–made

IT is not superfluous to praise the divine gifts much and often. Certain weapons, the sledge and its derivatives, among which the wheel with its derivatives, are given man together with his environment, a true revelation by the Beneficent. At a chosen moment, as a civilization unfolds, man is allowed to economize his powers, to increase and multiply those things which, rightly used, lead him through rational to the uncreated Beauty. The moment is that of mechanical invention.

This new thing—I call it new with necessary reservations—is so familiar that only the observant detect it. To the many, turning on the tap or the electric light, travelling by the railway, are underivedly natural processes; the postage stamp hardly differs from a leaf.

Yet, blind and deaf men, think of a bridge, a beautiful concrete bridge, and the white ribbon crossing it in long and splendid curves, marvellously engineered; and the exquisite vehicles speeding upon it, so fair and swift, so strong in their sweetness, that they have to brake down at villages. 10 MPH brings tears to the eyes. What seems to be a word "yomph" means ten miles an hour. There is exultation in the word if it is remembered what blows rained on the buttocks of the war prisoner marching to Shusan the Palace[1] before the driver got two miles an hour out of him. You read at the foot of hills: "Loosen the hame rein," "Give him his head." I have never read, "For God's sake carry her bundle or her baby." Even the hame rein of men and poor mothers has been loosened by the engineer.

This man stands for two different men: the great one who makes the road and the wharves, and his little busy friend who would tell you for a joke that he makes sewing machines. Qui que tu sois[2] you owe more to the grey haired man and the chap smelling of whale oil with his vernier[3] in a special pocket than you can ever repay.

The old beast of burden now smokes a cigarette at his toil: he had not even to crack a whip. The slavery of the slave is nearly freedom, which might be complete but for ineradicable love of slavery and the task master.

With these great things there arrive millions of little conveniences, which lengthen life by multiples of two figures and give ease and voluntary occupation in copious measure. To mention one—or a thousand—is superfluous; anyone can do this for himself. Still, and there is a touch of anecdote in what I recall, I will mention two Camaldolese lay brothers whom P. P. Mackey knew.[4]

"Think, brother," said he, "how times have changed; what things have come into use in our day."

"Yes, brother," said he, "think of fosfori" (matches).

"Exactly, brother," said he, "when I was a young brother, and before the discovery of fosfori, a brother had to get up an hour before the brother that rung the bell for matins,[5] to get a light."

Readers of H. Melville will remember that getting a light can be even more laborious than the young lay brother thought.

For hooks and eyes and the correct time, for stick, string, puttees and all the *agréments*[6] imaginable, we have to pay. Different men have different notations for this fee. Common men, of whom I know one, reckon it in pounds and pence. Ask the editor of *Christian Democrat* and he will give an answer bordering on metaphysic, and leave you—or rather me—deeply confused. But "We have to pay" are words I have read in *Christian Democrat*, and before I read them I was persuaded of the truth they express. Assume then there is agreement here. The object of these pages is to put and enforce the question: Why pay

more than is needful? and elicit the answer: Why indeed? For thus, when all things were handmade as buns are to this day, a man who wore buttoned clothes had a desire to button and unbutton (for each button possessed everything but a soul; excuse extreme explicitness) equivalent, mutatis mutandis,[7] to that which makes a normal man unable to refuse a Bath bun. For the bun is, like a cloud, unique; and no power can make it otherwise. While biscuits! everyone knows bears refuse them. Who today chooses and loves his buttons, or knows them when he sees them? Consider in contrast, then, a bun and a biscuit, an eighteenth century button and a twentieth. Produce concepts to infinity. You now compare a life of torturing sweetness, in which it is no miracle that the statues outside the western door of the Church can speak if they like (as was the case in 1225); that St. Gertrude,[8] when she dropped her needle (a thing almost as valuable as a wedding ring) in the hay, just picked it up without troubling to look for it, with, well, what we know: typewriters, half-tone blocks, bottled cider, leading articles, and things which once had an appropriate character but are now made, thought of and consumed by the gross. I am all, in the long view, for the present day, for the reasons professedly clear above.

But O God, how I crave for the artistic touch, by which I mean the touch of the maker's hand; for art is skill, just that. Some things, insusceptible of variety, because of their littleness or essential commonness—no one ever desired clothes-pegs, though the pretty gipsy-made things do, like the stars, to differ one from another—appeal still in their uniformity: boot-buttons, paper-clips, postage-stamps. I cannot see some things of the kind: Swedish matches, a machine-stitched book (not that vile wire stitch from the United States of America) without the accompanying vision of a brilliant and alert mind. The little darling bookstitcher makes a man remember Penelope,[9] except that it never regresses. As to the match, one hundred little fairies produce it, and their varied natures are known to only one man (an engineer naturally).

Some things, great in size, standardized with exceeding care, nevertheless retain that personal something of our desires: railway engines, motor cars.

Sometimes, as in machine-knitted clothes, it is great comfort to lack the personal touch. It is all very well to prize the stockings the bride made for you for playing the fiddle at her wedding; or, if you are a crank, to get your fittings made from sheepblack wool in the Faroes;[10] but, do give in, it is better still to have the two stockings of one size. If tempers last, we can talk on in the two senses till it is time for night prayers, or closing time. But the tendencies must become emphasized; while the Bath bun, no matter what the output, will still curl with the individuality of a sow's tail and the maker will drop upon it some small, indefinite number, varying in size, of sugar hailstones, without precision, the button will become more and more like itself; nay, such is its determination, it will forever approach that total likeness which can never really come about.

This is not only true, it is just, desirable even. Former men, who lived when our civilization first gushed, that incredible fountain of sense and beauty, had they the chance, would see in twenty-four hours what we are at, and love most of it. They would try all day to telephone to Rheims[11] and wind their wrist-watches incessantly, glancing frequently at the sun *to make sure*. Reapers and binders, barographs, machine-made bricks, girders and steel frames for buildings, what a time they would have! Even machine-carved statuary and vitriol-engraved inscriptions . . . one never knows.

But texture and taste, the veriness and handle of things, only the inconsolable yearner knows what is gone. The common of men will never know unless when they read such books as Bourne's *Wheelwright's Shop*.

But can nothing remain? Must all go? Comes the day when comfort and immunity, swelled and exasperated, will utterly displace grace and elegance. Is there an hour in the knowledge of God when baths

and lavatories satisfy the cultural needs of Europeans also? when the arts of life are forgotten, and even amusement, the lowest known substitute for recreation, is made into pillules and half-digested for the unamusable?

The standard article, the advertised thing, exercises a tyranny for which there is no excuse. He who perforce must make with his fingers and thumbs is tempted (and yields) to emulate the machine-made. Look at the confectioner's shop, and its misery of invention; while Staffordshire's[12] worst changes the tune day by day, growing badder and badderer as it changes. Who cannot say that a chocolate cake is what it is? Dogs know. Yet on it is written—if there is any exception in the British Islands I beg that confectioner's pardon—of all words in the *New English Dictionary*: Chocolate. It is enough to make a man use all the words *not* in the N. E. D.[13] Do you see the man? Do you see what he has in his hands? Boys and girls, he has a sugar fountain pen in his hand where we have an ink. And he writes: Chocolate. He could write: *Quis ut Deus*,[14] and still he writes: Chocolate.

And the biscuit, which I have not sufficiently praised; Huntley and Palmers, who have stood between me and death in my time: need there be such a determined lack of enterprise? You pick up the incomparable thing a biscuit is: its shades of colour, its lightness, crispness, delicate flavour, dustiness, all the properties for which you value it speak so intimately. There is lettering on it too—here the thing begins to lose caste; the lettering is poor, and the legend runs: Huntley and Palmer, Reading. I am certain that I have read those words somewhere before. Yes, it is a repetition. Transeat.[15] There is probably another word, such as *Dog* or *Crunch*. I say these words, whatever their merit, lack sustenance for the heart and the intellect. Sometimes there is a drollness in the biscuit's title; example, *Rich Tea*. It was a dismal biscuit, or more likely I was unworthy of it, but I have never really digested the name. A dog who knew two languages whom we called Toby[16] (you see here the detestable influence of

historical monotony) was made to believe the name of the biscuit was *Rich Dog*. In these observations I am only opening my mouth to praise. Signs appear that poetry has sneaked back in her rags to Reading; for there exist boxes of biscuits of which the buyer does not beforehand know the contents; and unless he is stupidly inquisitive he cannot find out. But behold, when the box is opened, great variety of shape, size, thickness, colour, number of holes and many other properties, all under one general rubric of "dryness," neither salt nor sweet, but all certainly worthy to lie beside Wensleydale cheese or even Brie. No names, no Huntley, no Palmer, nobody and nothing. What a beginning! He who makes a suggestion is pretty sure to make a fool of himself; and Do leave well alone; Leave Reading and Poetry to make biscuits. Nevertheless, if I were to find dates on biscuits—I do not mean dates as the Danes date hens' eggs; but crucial dates like (for me) 1866 and 1901[17]—how my heart would swell.

And soap, to change the hunt. When I was young "the soap" had a cameo representation of the Pope on it; or *a* Pope I ought to say; for, as English pillarposts are sometimes a bit astern in their chronology, the soap was generally a Pope or two out. What has the Pope done? Does no man now feel the need of holy soap? I call upon Cleaver, Tucker, or some Serene Highness of the Kingdom of Soap to restore Pope Pius XI[18] to one variety of Soap (which now I spell with a majuscule) and to another His Majesty George V[19] (may he live long), and so descend even to the last of the illustrious.

What can I care for Thing and Thingamee,[20] London and Paris? What is *violet* to me, or even *scented*, but a warning? Though I am clean I have a heart, and its needs must be met, even while I am washing my hands.

As I am not used to writing for the printing press, and generally end my compositions in an aphoristic manner, allow me to mention as follows in a mixture of fact and opinion.

Machinery is God-given.

It is the nature of machinery to work true; and men should see that it does.

Human intelligence should supply what is necessarily or accidentally lacking to machinery.

Machine the servant should be servile, and man its master magisterial.

"Winter Walking"

Blackfriars, 6 (March 1925), 148–153.

Father Gray was a dedicated hillwalker from the early days of his priesthood in Edinburgh. He would take off when he could find a day or two from this usual schedule and regularly, during the summers, spend two or three weeks walking in the Cotswolds and the West Country, usually with a companion. Here Gray posits that walking is essentially a spiritual exercise, "an ambit in imaginary space, where sensation is fruitful and its fruit imperishable"—a fruit garnered also in his extended poem, The Long Road (1926), *the poetic analogue of this essay.*

Winter Walking

OOD will be found in the man whose recreation is walking. The moralist means certainly subathletic walking, a true exercise of this form of progress, a test which hopes to be marked high. Results of it can only be compared in their productivity of good. While you experience the pleasant muscular soreness for which you have waited only after the twelfth mile, your mother may be satisfied for the day when she has reached the eighth. A walk in the sense indicated seems to connote for a lady twelve, for a man twenty, flat miles in Great Britain.

Restorative exercise, nay, prophylactic, for fatigues must needs be dispersed and ease insured, cannot, when there is hardly an acceptable substitute to propose, suffer seasonal restriction, accept hyemation.[1] Why should they? On the contrary.

External dispositions fit you rather for winter walking. You are becomingly shod by the very circumstance; and even legal clothing may seem too much in summer. Winter allays; and the walker is not without persecutors. "No heat, no dust, no flies" you will hear your hobnails sing upon the frost-resilient road. And the eyes find more than variety in the winter scene; they learn to choose dead-bracken-clothed steeps and pronounce their food "incomparable" when the blue of the mist deepens to the desired concord.

The Things Required by the walker are two; if the plurality of boots be admitted. These are loose, heavy, best reached-me-down; they are hard and uncouth until copiously anointed with neatsfoot

oil. If for the tread be desired pure leather, as the phrase is, let them be fitted with a clump sole; yet who but the exquisite so desire? Whence the question of nailing. If this be done in the village, let hobnails be well driven over all the sole, waist, and heel; but it is better to entrust the job to, say, Mr. Harden of Keswick; his hobnails stay where he drives them; and, if he add a few two-pronged nails round the sole in all parts, the boot will take a good bit of rough ground. To be worthy of so much trouble they must be really footbags—against water and mud, with flap-fronts laceholed all the way, and fitted with a big leather tug.

They are pulled on over two pairs of socks, so that any friction arising may be expended between wool and worsted without harm to feet.

That is the outfit for the body. If Bartholomew's[2] half-inch be in a pocket and the walker has a good conscience, nothing is wanting; the rest follows age, sex, and idiosyncracy. A stick is not forbidden; and the usual name for this object suggests its addition to the road-gear. Tobacco, sugar-sweets, chocolate, a Shetland waistcoat in a pocket, stationery, water-proof, compass, portable meal, vasculum,[3] camera, all claim to be fruits of experience; and some excite misgiving in other walkers' minds; though of the contingent use of each it is possible to discourse, particularly if the day's march include hills or moor.

But the walker's inheritance is length without breadth: the white road. It is true that he cannot see what is to be seen from other ground; yet most roads have ancient sense and venerable tradition for sponsors; and that man asks more than is human who would see seven wonders in his paltry seven leagues. There is one wonder: the creation; and it is contemplated by leg-stretching. Get on, if curtly expressed, is the marching order; be able, at the day's sweet end, to multiply the hours by your index, which probably will be 3 ½, and check by a glance at the map for the number of miles. Should

examination of conscience reveal gossip, dalliance by the way with the pretty (that disease of scenery) insanitary hovels, blue cows, cursed ruins, unwonted birds, the index sinks, perhaps by ½; or, if you botanize, even considerably. Though the eye cannot be filled, the attempt to fill it is as well maintained walking as lounging. Real trouble calls for a halt; and for remedies, even to the abandonment of the journey; standing about is only affectation, which may lead to hypocritical exclamations: che bello![4] Most experience a tickle of fatigue at the third mile, perhaps because circulation adjustment is taking place; and genuine fatigue, if it occur later on, may be a sign that the body needed exercise for its health. There should be no fatigue; he who strolls out after his evening meal among strange gables, say at Bicester, Dunstable, when gloom flatters the lines and proportions of dwellings, sometimes feels as though he were an orphan, and that, strangely, it is delightful to be so; that is enough.

Why men walk will not be decided today; walking has *not* been defined. A walk is no more an extension of going to the Post Office than eternity is a multiple of time; a hint at the intricacy of the definition (when found) appears in the hypothesis of the walking companion. You could walk to the gallows with lots of men with whom you could not walk upon Exmoor. The companions must not be too much interested in one another; they must have a common object, not a mutual. No one walks in Lovers' Loan; that subterranean cloister in Mr. Asquith's earldom[5] is no place for walking. *La salle des pas perdus*,[6] how well named!

Some think that the essence of walking is spiritual; that it is a certain struggling of the soul at length successful; or, less speculative, that it is a recovery of balance or of harmony. This is praise. But one consequence of walking may be named enrichment; for it places certain powers of the mind so advantageously that genuine needs are supplied, and lavishly. If this be not so, in what realm of illusion is walking effected? Evidently we must keep to the road, as it heaves and swings under the sky, both physically and metaphorically. Is there

here a clue? Is walking an escape from illusion? The walker does not savour analogies, for they injure his impressions, too delicate to support their weight. What, however, of the analogy of satisfied thirst? The craving; its allayment and extinction as water is tasted and swallowed; there is at least enjoyment, perhaps rapture; the drinker attributes properties to the draught, and with conviction, which at another time he could not discern; flavour, texture, temperature uplift and strain the senses; but the mirage of thirst is shattered. Is walking a return?

The fox circulates in the cover and chooses an exit. The tramp is obstinate. Cain departs.[7] The child swings from the cedar bough. The raider rides to his mischief. The stocks are unlocked. The visitor turns into the drive and pulls up as light is switched on in the porch and the friend is seen emerging from the shelter of his hospitality. The walker does many things, and something more; walking is life. It is leaving that which is yet present and returning by a safe journey to that which was never distant; an ambit in imaginary space, where sensation is fruitful and its fruit imperishable.

It is also an approach, raised above degradation and attainment; a property made visible in the skyline, for this reason utterly attractive, remaining forever at an ideal distance, passing through insensible modifications to another geographical name. That finite treasure should be such as is thus approached! That variety should never bewilder and ever offer a choice! Objects beyond value suffer nothing from not being preferred. The anatomy of a tree may be more acceptable than its cloud of leaves and no wrong done; a bare ash in fruit only of withered "keys," as its seedpods are sometimes called, and perching starlings is not negative; the brown of the winter field is more than the absence of corn in August or its preparation; the sinuosity of its lines answering to the roll of the land is an end in itself, and not more approachable because the instrument of production is known. Cause and effect are here no more than steps for the

mind to run up and down upon; there is communication between the external and that within which has power to admit or exclude.

For, in another view, isolation is desired, sought, found; isolation in its etymology; the island stout and strong, nothing hugoesque,[8] concentrated; its possessions intense, so with strict reference to the widening dimension of the ocean in which it is, an ocean spherical and truly external, as no organic thing could ever be imagined, either in extent or exteriority. Those wise in aesthetic hasten to note that rus and urbs[9] are exclusive; and infer that when attention is withdrawn from social and civic objects, tarn and cloud, crag and bush arrest desires and emotions in search of a term. Beware of the plausible; rebut the explanation that substitution of the inanimate object is unconscious. The desire is not brought in any form from usual life; but is born upon the road itself; and that of the experience itself, in its variety and its harmonies. The thing, if it is at all, is greater than aesthetic.

A partial explanation might be sought with the notion of harmony as a lode. The rhythms of creation are by far more various than immediate observation can detect; many movements are continuous or otherwise regular, wind, water, stars, creatures, day and night, seasons. Forms, colours, tones of the visible world synthesize. The human entity also has its regular movements, from which for the present purpose must by no means be omitted those which walking necessitates. It might be suggested that stride and breathing, pulse and swing, secondary muscular movements fall into accord with cosmic rhythms, and produce that knowledge of well-being and well-doing which needs above all a harmony. There are rhythms unknown, without and within, which yet may contribute to exaltation. Wonders enough are within natural reach. Gladness may come from harmonies and combinations not at once definable, as water, beverage, rivulet, snowflake, has gases for its chemical constituents; and be further enhanced by the association which brings it forth, of

beings so unlike as creation, vast, external, and an isolated consciousness.

"Man's *Visible Works*"

Blackfriars, 6 (October 1925), 450–455.

Here Gray attacks the notion that man's artefacts ruin a landscape. In a vigorously unsentimental essay, Gray argues that these may well constitute reasonable additions to the natural scene. As an exercise in persuasion, it may well serve as a model as to how to examine conventional assumptions—such as those about the relation of man and nature—without resorting to full frontal attack. Gray proceeds obliquely, by means of a series of subtle aesthetic discriminations, finally leaving the reader in the air, with a picture of a steam engine delicately making its way across a railway viaduct. Always the poet, even in prose, he grounds the argument in the irrefutable and irreducible concreteness of felt experience.

Man's Visible Works

T is not easy to find the word descriptive of that hold which the external can exercise in favourable conditions through the senses upon man's spirit. There might be a successful plea that this influence is more real than is supposed, necessary to men if human dignity is to be upheld; such is not here advanced; but rather one or two practical questions, modestly constructed, are submitted with deference, as: Is not the vague, unnamed, very real relation between man and his inanimate correspondent subject to all the varieties and discriminations allowed to "taste"? Again, in discourse of this matter the word beauty must sooner or later be used; very well, but man is beautiful, though this is only a memory. Regrettez vous le temps où le ciel sur la terre marchait et respirait dans un peuple de dieux?[1] The little we can say at present is: man might harmonize with the created beauty external to himself; but the fact is that his presence is seldom tolerable and very rarely acceptable. Shrinking, he has lost a function; he is reduced to a spectator, and can no longer be wedded to bosquet and glade except in spirit, Walt Whitman's endeavours and other's nonobstant.[2] It is by chance that man and his are not eyesorrow, distraction, hindrance, scandal, discord among the elements where he might have wonted place.

That the scandalgiver is man sometimes seems to justify impatience and abandonment of the enterprise; but to close our eyes is to relinquish our only true external inheritance, and that is the last

sacrifice. Remains for the beholder to accommodate his desires to facts, accept inevitable dilution and look with discretion.

Right as the untouched earth must have been—no one questions the undefilable sky, nor has dreamed that he could improve the open sea—and instant as the three are to reduce the unwelcome line, to eradicate the living species undesired, to begin forthwith to obliterate scars and tumours of industry and war, that it has been touched by hands clean and unclean is so present a fact as to be no longer a subject for discourse. We detect the presence of our kind without delay; the notions of the human self and habitable space at once coalesce into a new notion of a man in his environment. But our attitude is contentious; we would clear the scene so that this presence shall be inopportune, the individual an intruder.

Away, then, with man himself (hand him over to the great landscape painters and forget him when not visiting a Louvre), his attire, his vehicles, his crowds, his picnics; suffer him perhaps in his grouping on market days. Show some tenderness, however, to his cultivation, grazing animals, quarries, roads, for examples; but upon the whole view him with provisional hostility.

With all right on our side we wish to behold, to give attention, to enjoy a complicated state of spirit. The causes of that which delights the vision *sub dio*[3] are many, and include a variety of movements, continuous, rhythmic, erratic, changes of light, swifter or slower. Entitled or not, one so engaged considers himself privileged, and resents as so many blind spots in a glory of reality works, intruding works, of man. To illustrate the exacerbation of the intrusion. Look across a small manufacturing town from a hill, and make selection from the series of sensations and reflections, inevitable, commonplace, to those who have learned to register them; perhaps somewhat in this way: The skyline, however well known, is seen as for the first time; in truth it has never been twice alike since the world was made; and each of its innumerable moments speaks

permanence, delivering to the sentient mind delicacy milleniums have at length achieved. Convergences are new in the grades approaching it; the colouring, what with the season, vegetation, density of the air, reflection of the sky, is thus or otherwise. Look at the scene, for it is yours alone and only now. The town at your hillfoot, busy beyond the needs of business far, more dogged than the insurance office desires, odious as in the thoughts of its commercial rivals. Its advertisements are legible; its chimneys smoke; it rumbles, hums, hoots to its employes, rings the Angelus,[4] strikes the hour. Its gyrations and pendulum actions are all deceit. Against its background of "unbuilt land" it exhibits the final symptom of human things: *rigor mortis*. Like the door to a tomb, hinting at the life of the living and the resurrection of the dead, one thing says *Spera*,[5] the road which jumps the river and speeds with all perspective among the hills.

Movement, our nature's sweet defect. "There is that goal to which thy vows ascend; there the repose for which the whole world sighs" is an apostrophe both rational and instinctive, expressing well human abhorrence of the stationary. We approve of man's absence from the scene, we approve of his possible advent; equally, and for the same reasons, of his past (and future) passage. "The voice I hear this passing day was heard in ancient days."[6] This is the emotion of roads, of wheeltracks upon the moor; "drowsy tinklings."[7] The idea is contemporaneous with the human heart. If I must see him, or be reminded of him, let him at least move. A diarist has published a memorable saying. The scene was a tent, through the opening of which the occupants rested their eyes upon the dark Arabian night; and one said: "How peopled the desert is; I suppose there is in all this region scarcely a place where I have not lighted my fire."

Permanent traces of man may be reasonable addition to subtler lines and surer colour: his dykes, his planting, houses, quarries, mills. He was here; and in need; or with inspired rage he felled trees and tore down the mountains to re-erect them according to his fancy. It

is petulant, in the world where our pleasures of vision are to be found and in rich abundance, that the refrain should ever be: the natural scene is always right and always new. Cultivation is geometric and attempts no disguise; but the elements of perspective will constantly arrive at some agreement; the roll of horizontal lines, the happy accident, hard juxtapositions, amazing patches, tinted air and shadows of clouds whisper glory where there is least promise of it. In view of a shallow cultivated valley accept frankly the piecework quilt or even the chessboard as the terminus *a quo*;[8] the free may embrace the tilled or be by it inclosed; in more ways than one man's plot and the wild may become friends. The geology of a country will often support a vast load—of responsibility—with atlantic[9] ease, and save many an ill act from downright degradation. Though long lines are essential to great scenery (and consequently in England the aesthetic fingerposts all point to the chalk), scale in landscape is not important; and, barring risk of the pretty, a charming scene may be of small extent. The irregularly spotty is the prevalent enemy.

Buildings—the subject is intricate—we judge summarily for our purpose. The irrational (as all obelisks) must be excluded by an effort of the mind, or endured. Guideposts may adorn the scene; one near Campden,[10] for example; and, in the west, crosshands evidently of Roman lineage. Some structures lord it over what we must call nature, and witness the human mind: temples, monasteries, palaces, bridges. The builder was on his feet and alert; building in the name of mankind. But private buildings move along with the easy stride of those who, thinking little, follow a well-known track; so long as they do so we shall not complain. Farm buildings have often the high serenity of mediately natural things, such as good manners and ceremonial dress. Their effect can be analysed; the disposition of parts understood and described. Simple, direct, excellently adapted, the plan has come of experience and tradition, and angularities have been reduced by time; but the whole place, answering to living needs, has acquired an aspect of life and necessary being not easily

accounted for. The primitive, nobler remains, though haggard, untidy, of humbler use, often put to shame the modern dwelling beside them, and brand it with vulgarity. Farms need no great value, nor acknowledged historical or aesthetic interest, to take a worthy place in a general scene of cultivation, higher ground and unified horizon. Buildings which are truly part of a scene will be found to be related by multiple ties to the area with which they do not disagree; almost indigenous; their site probably immemorial. Note that a "gentleman's property" is an evolved farm, and owes its interest to that alone.

Remain buildings too big for any landscape to assimilate, which may or may not arrive at harmony with the natural scene: gaol, school, sanatorium, water-supply, power-plant, factory, observatory, barrack. These structures know their position, that they are foreign, irreconcilable, intolerable, and boastful. This is right, so far; il faut être de son temps.[11] Abandon reason for the short time of the encounter, and apostrophize the sewage-disposal or distillery. We know you are useful, benevolent, necessary; farewell. For we must imitate the false prophet who, when the mountain refused to move, is said himself to have gone away. Illustration: the Reader of course knows what to expect at the next visit to the Perte du Rhône (parmi les merveilles de la France)?[12] All but those whom the cypher 250,000 h.p. can uplift and dessicated geologists move off in silence up the gorge, for consolation in a sight of the Grand Credo. Better than going on to the fortress, stop at Longeray, and the Café Merme; omelette; wine. Admire the little vineyard; feed your benefactresses the hens; tease the future proprietor, who will come to look at you. You are far beyond the power of horses; the summit of terrestrial beauty is somewhere within a couple of days march. Try the Reculet or the Crêt de la Neige[13] for a silhouette of Switzerland.

And yet the big structures just now deplored might be well enough. The kind of pilgrim we are does not say beforehand what he wants; unless "I must see something not unworthy of my

experience of visible things." The mighty steps of Jura; the agitated silhouette to the east; the box plant such as suburban gardens will never dream; surprises which the next moment are age-old and inevitable. The addition to experience might be a work of man: as take the valley of the Welland,[14] looking northward, and from the Northhamptonshire side; so exquisitely shallow, the cultivation beyond the stream, slow between its squashy banks, so fair through perspective bringing its horizontal lines together and swallowing the vertical—a refinement of the English scene which seems unsurpassable. From nearby Rockingham a low, delicate object appears indecipherable, which soon suggests a railway viaduct (as it proves to be), with a persistent difficulty of interpreting its colour, rich rose with fantastic mottling of darkest blue. Short of Gretton, the usual railway is cruelly exemplified. Then charming Gretton, with its outlook from the church platform towards Rutland, its kind inhabitants. The meditative traveller measures his own height against the whipping-post (with its thoughtful provision for sinners of different height); and there again is the thousand-legged viaduct—yes, in its beauty; and a white cloud of (physical) progress moving with dainty energy along its splendid curve.

"Hymns: A Suppressed Preface"

Blackfriars, 6 (October 1925), 578–581.

The essay was written originally as a preface to St. Peter's Hymns (Kensington: Cayme Press, 1925), a book of hymns composed by Gray for use in his parish church of St. Peter's, Falcon Avenue, Edinburgh. In rejecting the "really vile use of vernacular hymns, which are chopped up arbitrarily in their singing," Gray defends the hymn as "a product of art: that is, skill." As far as I know, this essay is unique in requiring of hymns the kind of craftsmanship that Gray, as an artisan's son, also required of the building and furnishing of his own church, St. Peter's. It seems that St. Peter's Hymns may have been intended as a companion to Gray's book on St. Peter's, Edinburgh: A Brief Description of the Church and Its Contents (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1925), a pamphlet published in anticipation of the twentieth anniversary of the building of the church, the foundation stone of which was laid in April 1907.

Hymns: A Suppressed Preface

OW hymns have been serviceable to man in the service of his Creator who needs to be told? The words *et hymno dicto*[1] resound in the memory . . . speaking to one another in psalms and hymns. . . . The Liturgy has used more hymns in the past than it does today. Those who know Dreves' *Analecta Hymnica*[2] must conceive hymns as in tens of thousands. The many of what have been are no longer wanted; yet the Dreves collection may serve the divine worship at some later day.

Hymns and spiritual songs are needed too for private and semi-private use. What have we for those of English speech? It is better to let this rhetorical question hang without its pendant. To ask why there is no English hymn in this or that authorized collection which a Christian could without blushing sing, for example, before the Chancellor and Vice-Chancellor of the University of Oxford, equals a more direct question: Whose office is it to write English hymns? Suggested answer: Dryden, Crashaw, Southwell, Coventry Patmore, Michael Field, Lionel Johnson, Gerard Hopkins.[3] Lengthen the list to fancy.

I choose great and reputable names of poets who could make some defence against the charge of neglect to perform an obvious duty. Can living men and women who have inherited the charge return even so supportable an apology as their predecessors?

In this meagre collection it would seem as if the stones had cried out. "If those won't, some one must" is almost legible in Mr.

Sainsbury's brilliantly printed and ornamented pages.[4] The need is known; pens must be reaching for the inkpot; young and vigorous poets, pious and holy men and women, will not leave the Lord and His Mother and all their lovely Friends unsung.

It is not unfit to allude to the Enthusiasts of the Wesley time, and their prodigious activity as hymn writers.[5] You have in [the] Olney hymns[6] a microcosm of the Evangelical and Methodistical fecundity. Three hundred and forty-eight hymns were written by a retired slave-trader and a poet fond of hares, primarily for the use of the mad, diseased, and sunken inhabitants of a village more famous for its squalour than for anything else historically, which still supports its reputation with fair fidelity. Approach the sources of the Revival and you will find it claimed for one man (Charles Wesley) that he wrote 6,500 hymns. Let others appreciate the causes of that fertility, the religious content of the compositions, the white heat of sacred passion at moments reached;

> (The altar streams with sacred Blood,
> And all the temple flames with God.

It was no emotional beggar wrote that couplet); the external phenomenon is all to which I allude. And again let another reiterate his arguments for the use by authentic Christians of these voices of nature. With determination not to embark upon an enticing sea, I observe that good hymns of the Enthusiasts all possess a common character: a notion is cast into some measure just then tickling the inward ear, and the complete work rushes into being without labour or delay. Thus is vouchsafed a property which every work of art must exhibit, whether it be produced instantaneously, in a dream, or with labour covering years of time. Need is the hymn be reconceived as a product of art; that is, skill. Spurious origin, and really vile use of vernacular hymns, have condoned a custom of treating these poor things as a cook treats cucumber, cutting off so many slices of the fruit as he needs to garnish his dish. At the end of the last century,

when I was a "Scozzese,"[7] a service we used was garnished with a "hymn" consisting of two "verses" of something or other. Often the latter verse was as follows:

> The lone lamp softly burns, and a wondrous silence reigns;
> Only with a low still voice the Holy One complains.

As a fervent young man I responded to the notion obviously hinted at, while a sense of the language I know and love sent the blood to my head in indignation at this self-complacent trash. But there was a silly result as well: we never sang what the complaint was; and to this day I do not know.

Unless for purposes now before readers' thoughts we are to continue to wallow, the hymn must be regarded as in its nature indivisible, consisting like other individuals of ends and a middle. And here musical composers must help to repair a wrong: by setting it, the hymn, and not only a unit of it. The result should rather resemble the call of a bird than a pattern of hotel wallpaper.

An analogy may please the potential hymn-writer. The difficulty which is the last to be acknowledged by him is known from the outset to all who reflect for a moment: he does not know what to write about; while she perhaps thinks she does and is mistaken. A visible work of religious art can only be produced by two in collaboration: a theologian, namely, and an artist. Works are empty and futile because they have dispensed with the theologian; and sometimes of course with the artist also. One of the differences between thirteenth-fourteenth and nineteenth century religious art arises from this discrimination.

So your hymn writer must consult his theologian friend, or rather one who will consent to consultation, who knows and loves the Breviary and the Mass Book. The theologian can direct the artist to short passages from the psalms, to antiphons, introits, and other

pregnant sentences in very great number, which each could outfit many hymns.

Some minds can synthesize a poem slowly, unconsciously. The hymn, hardly a poem, might conveniently owe its existence to this faculty; or it might be slogged,[8] as the word used to be in studios; or composed round the breakfast table, as by William, Dorothy, and Mary.[9] Writers should not be timid of falling into those literary defects the discovery of which has made more than one small reputation. Faults which, made by a Tennyson after having pulled out the bourdon,[10] would be world-shaking, are negligible

(1) in this type of composition;

(2) in so vast an undertaking as hymn production.

My grave as little as my bed.
Laden souls by thousands meekly stealing.
What odds?

Above all, innumerable hymns are wanted, merely good and bad, as well as 'middling and infamous.' From a vast stock discerning and undiscerning faithful would make selection. And the rest will perish? Nay, visi sunt oculis insipientium mori; illi autem sunt in pace.[11] The authors will hear them sung in eternity. At least, may the almighty God grant it.

"Excursion"

Blackfriars, 7 (February 1926), 80–85.

Another of the essays arising from Gray's walking tours, this one charts an expedition in early January over the Tweed to Yarrowdale and St. Mary's Loch, an area associated with the poets James Hogg and Robert Burns. It was also intimately associated with Gray's own poetry. St. Mary's Loch inspired "Andante," and the numerous other rivers, lakes and brooks, compacted into one archtypal stream, form the impetus of Gray's "Ode" (both published in Poems 1931). (In order of citation, the rivers, lakes and brooks: the Tweed, Quair Water, Newhall Burn, Mountbenger Burn, the Yarrow, the Treig and Spean, Loch Treig, the Avon, the Wye, the Jökulsá, the Thames, the Hungerford, the Kintbury, the Kennet, the Dee, Meggatt Water, the Loch of the Lowes, Yarrow Water, Tushielaw Burn, and the Ettrick),

Excursion

EN or half-past get off from Innerleithen Station,[1] southwards, in early days of January. Before you might know it you are over the Tweed,[2] a Scotch river which has already acquired an "English accent." There is plenty of water in its tributaries, and their little daughters; the whole country is abustle with them. You catch no sight of the beautiful old house[3] as you pass through Traquair Village and cross Quair Water.

The scene soon gets to business. Before you are beyond the last fir plantation and straggling, bad-tempered-looking birches, it is evident that the country is of a high quality; and if you turn to verify the steepness of the ascent, the view of Moorfoot,[4] seldom disappointing, is fine. It is Newhall Burn against which you are walking; the road in time leaves it deep on the right in the valley, the far side of which has become a vast wall of pasture. Only get the sun upon it and any sort of blue sky, and the effect is admirable: the grass tends to be quite pale; the bracken, squirrel-colour of course, provides the striking accent; the heather is sepia, and a scanty element. A few pockets of snow help; as may later the nearly black of a peat cutting; but not the outbreaking stone, blueish. The sheep are blueish too; here is a flock of ewes, watching the departure of a ram, refractory without hope against the tactic of a fine border lad[5] and two young bitches.

The moor at the watershed, what with the winding road and the undulating ground, looks wild and remote; though there is nothing

specially fearsome about it, less than twelve hundred feet high and seen from a good driving road. Mountbenger Burn now overtakes the companions it would never understand, though the creator enriched it with a soul: the man and his expensive servant, the road. In a mile or so you are down to cultivation, well reintroduced to you by the farm which shares its names with the burn,[6] as usual hereabout. It is an old farm modernized; and it displays the handsome whinstone masonry which arrests the stranger's eye in all the border.

You are in Yarrowdale. The hotel at the crossroad is conveniently pitched for lunch; and it is a long mile to the next opportunity. Those who continue ahead, crossing the Yarrow, ascend by a road which gives excellent views, especially up Yarrowdale, with its inclosing heights in exquisite perspective; reaching the watershed, it divides into the two roads which you use this evening. For, having lunched, your direction is St. Mary's Loch; and it lies through a famous dale, and by a river of uncommon beauty, in its own refined way. For how the element of natural life and supernatural grace is varied. In all orientations, pant like the hart for the fountains,[7] and you will not be far wrong. There could be a readable, reasoned dictionary on H_2O; discoursing of the mists in all their hues, densities and forms, metamorphoses, economies, circulation, until immobilized in insoluble, millenial glaciers.

Proportioned to our scale, what are no more than invisible trickles upon the earth conceived as a globe, affect a thousand varieties, incidents, incapable of repetition, almost of comparison: the Treig and Spean issuing from Loch Treig, amber when transparent, and wreathed in whirling suds, is a course of water which satisfies the judgement, as it descends into its shining chasm of black rock: that is what a river should be. The bed of the Stratford Avon, so full of the element, moving imperceptibly, makes the river the only indisputable thing the length of the legendary town. An anxious Wye seems anywhere to be looking blindly for its source. The rivers of

the Dordogne[8] run at a selected depth beneath the surface of the province. Those of Iceland look to be geologically ancient or young, as we choose the epithet, and produce a sense of misgiving that nature is not telling the exact truth, such as the temperamentally unconvinced experience in the presence of those birds, beasts and reptiles with generic names ending in saurus. Nor yet all in one way; for the river debouching at Seyisfjörur drops a step of uniform height every so-many paces, until rhythm in nature becomes a haunting thought, and the ice-lined rocks of its decor lose their interest; and the Jökulsá (in the north-east) achieves the terrible, simply. As to the Thames, it is the Thames for those of English speech, like a man's mother ordained to be what it is, and right. While it is yet in Cotswold,[9] we follow a classic example and walk with diversion in its bed, adorned with mints and mimulus; or feel personally aggrieved at the vile treatment it receives at its rival sources from human, if not diabolical, savages. Hungerford, Kintbury, the blessed Kennet, with its multiple, varying channels; it is perfect in such a way that we would rather it were not discussed, even praised.

Meantime the Yarrow has flowed miles, perhaps even changed its name in space if not in time; and it is still where we left it, and still the Yarrow, incomparable; the river type, appealing to the Dee to confirm its claim; shallow, lively, bright; of a breadth and gradient almost designed; straight without rigour; and flowing in what a spacious valley; among hills how softly pale-green, how rounded, unfussed by trees; without spots or any defilement; like a becoming toga, *sine macula*.[10] Whenever you look the way you came it will not be for nothing. But you have reached the Loch,[11] and the hills descend to its verge.

"I see; a lake." Yes, but do see; there is something to see; something to praise, greatly. And the difficulty is so to word such praise as to convince the absent. Either it must take the form: consult esteemed authors; or, if adequate, it must provoke the retort courteous: evidently the writer is an inhabitant, if not a native, of the only

place on earth. You are keeping your eyes, and all of them, upon the everchanging horizon, and you do well. Say there are twenty hills visible; it is hard to count them. Each has its outline; and each its colour, pattern; and perspective, if the state of the light permit; but nothing to impair desired unity. A green-grown cart-road ascends on your right; follow it. It is a natural track shoved off up the brae,[12] perhaps by a vanished property situated at the lake edge; it is easily legible through the rough, and gives improved views, particularly down the dale. You reach what seems the loch head, with some shanties and an ugly church; but the loch is boomerang in shape; and your road, evidently, without the fingerpost help, swings left to follow the margin of the water.

Here all that is visible undergoes sudden enhancement. Before you reach the bridge over Meggatt Water, a tributary of the lake, and at the bridge, look all round with attention, in case you have before you the loveliest lake scene you will ever have the chance to behold; with half luck in sky effect this will probably be true. Thus for a furlong.

There are fears ahead which may have crystallized into calamity before your next long leave; not the transformation of the loch into a reservoir—*dis aliter*.[13] Among the golden memories of things past in the sister dales there are disquieting rumours of the present, one of which seems to imply the early tinkering up of the district, with the assurance of accelerated services, to make of it a money-spender's resort. There was, of course, some truth in what the Ghost said to the Bishop: folk must go somewhere.

There is a chain of two lochs: that praised; and the Loch of the Lowes, linked to the greater by fifty yards of the businesslike Yarrow Water. You've to cross the bridge here; after you have inspected the Hogg Memorial,[14] a touching expression of local affection for a big man; the intention in the sitting statue, with a sheep-dog and accessories, all in keeping and dignity; as far away from the shameful

Johnson[15] as Lichfield is from Yarrowdale. His plaid is engraved with straight lines crossing at right angles (and pray why should not they?); and round about, and on a scroll in his hand, are lines laudatory of Hogg, and therefore not by him: 'He taught the wandering winds to sing.'[16] Over the bridge is Tibbie Shiels,[17] now a place, one time a body (as old men say in Scotland). It is an agglomerate of fidgetty buildings, filled you may be sure with kind ungrudging hospitality. One of those who made the original name world-famous[18] woke one morning and from a box bed in a kitchen called 'Tibbie, Tibbie, bring me the loch.' He had used his foreknowledge to ensure overnight a sensation of thirst in the morning. As we see, there are two lochs, and he only asked for one. He must have meant the Loch of the Lowes, unless he was exaggerating his pangs of thirst.

You ascend into desolate beauty; partly in *natura rerum*;[19] partly due to the late light; often at the first sensations of fatigue, hunger, the little child in us stretches out hands to the loveliest person present; and more easily, with a maturer sense, to that which ravishes vision alone, and upon an unlimited scale. It is a quick rise; and the falling waters crossed are torrents; it soon offers you the advantage of looking over lower hills to what are great hills for this neighbourhood, Broad Law 2723, Dollar Law 2680.[20] Further, a silent waste, of one green practically, and lines in harmonious conflict. The sheep seem to be recalling the last man they saw; and for good reasons there are no motor vehicles. You reach, and it seems long, the summit where the three roads radiate: number two descending to the place where you lunched; the third which you take. Sounds return here. Tushielaw Burn has started, and is soon noisy, deep on your right; we are all hurrying for the Ettrick. It is easy enough going for men, enticed by the rewards of the day's end. You reach the road Selkirk to Ettrick. We take it right, and are at the door of the inn. Peter Smith was warned of possible arrival after dark; but it is still light enough to see a sheep. The days are lengthening.

You were wise in this respect also, that you took the direction you did; for the plan of a day's walk should provide for some development of beauty by the way, and increased contentment hour by hour. To-morrow you propose to follow Ettrick to the Tweed; but you would be wise too if you retraced your steps of today. For thus you would have the good sights ahead as you walk; and, throughout the day, the sun, if visible, would not shine in your eyes.

"Trespassers Will Be Prosecuted"

Blackfriars 9 (March 1928), 164–69.

This is a whimsical meditation on the wording of certain public notices. It should be noted that it is Gray's first essay purely on language, indicating a shift in artistic direction. Previously, he had told stories. After the nineties, he does not trust the coherence of his writing to narrative, but relies instead on a kind of psychological coherence. The essays progress as a kind of meditation, usually held together by a proposed topic. In this essay and the next, however, the movement is from one phrase or group of words to another, with the words themselves forming the nexus of the essay. Here, plot (or anecdote) derives as explication of words and has become increasingly private in its reference. In this change of direction, Gray is reflecting one of the great shifts of modernism, away from narrative, the structuring of experience through plot, to the structuring of experience through language.

It should also be of particular note in this essay that Gray no longer credits language (such as the admonitory "Trespassers Will Be Prosecuted") with having any power to change behaviour—language being no longer either fatal or sacred, but an entity in itself which intervenes in human experience only on notable occasions (as with the man who discovers, inadvertently, he is a "trespasser").

Trespassers Will Be Prosecuted

HOUGH a bright young lady remembered to have read a notice *Trespassers will not be Prosecuted*, the attentive will mark no fatal difference of futility between this alleged and the well-known warning. *Departure Platform; Beware of Pickpockets;* and there are others; juxtapositions of words which do not scan, are not irreducible, leave the uninstructed ignorant; and, if we consider them in any carping spirit, are filled with false assumptions, petitiones principii,[1] innuendoes and concealed negatives. Warn a man; do. Warn him briskly, leaving him no rejoinder; laconically. A warning connotes danger, proximate or contingent. It is useless to say *Wolf* to a stranger in the Tube. He would only reply: "Excuse me, sir, my name is Lambb." But when the voltage is known and protection is nugatory, express your thoughts succinctly. No matter in what land of Europe, you have seen the notice, pictorial, resembling the design of the jolly roger, affixed to posts supporting live wire. There is the human spirit: alike expressed in the will, fulfilled, to have the tramcar hurtle through the province, threading hamlets like pearls upon a worthy chain, as far from the waterfall as it desires; and in the sober stare of death: Do not meddle, brother.

But *Trespassers will be Prosecuted;* a decayed relic of that noble fruit of the mind, the expedient rules drawn up by the piratical farmers old Norwegians were, to the end that fighting and plunder might continue their honourable course, and life be yet prolonged for the service of God and men. It is too late—but even now some paraphrase

like *Strangers will be Hunted or Pursued* would convey to the incipient intruder a distinct image of possible consequences; as would *Mastiffs, Bloodhounds* or mere *Dogs*.

Wyatt, a farmer but no pirate, gave, in his moorland dialect, directions for a journey somewhat off the course of the young Exe:[2] Follow the wheel-tracks to the peat-cutting; then you'll see the bog to the left, sloping; keep down till you come to a post with a notice *Please Shut the Gate* (and there's never been no gate there that I can remember); and so on, trackless and sure. Shift the scene to a forest in a greater land, and the advice would run: Continue until you see a notice *Trespassers will be Prosecuted*, and then go where you like, for all is of the first class; and break your neck according to opportunity.

Please Shut the Gate is not an uninteresting inscription, whether there is a gate or not; and it adds to the activities of those who pass that way. A pretty variant could be seen in the lane leading from Batheaston to Colerne:[3] *Everybody shuts the gate but you*. There is vitality in *Shut the Gate*; if there were a thousand commandments instead of ten it might be one of them.

No doubt *Ancient Lights*[4] still shine in appropriate places, and the manifestation of their brightness has its use; but no one would be sadder if A and B became confused; if *Trespassers etcetera* looked from a height of sixty feet upon a scene of demolition; and *Ancient Lights* would be no less cautionary, minatory, vindictive, malevolent standing in a pool of water on some uncharted foothills, or stuck in the snows of Cairntoul.[5] The foxes and badgers would keep still to the traditional routes.

Oh, but you say. Yes, I know. And, when the small boys are found in proximity to the birds' nests by the huge game-keeper, who is also their cousin, have you heard what it is the big man does? He chucks his knife from a legal distance at the feet of the boys, commanding them to cut the relevant buttons from their clothes "so that the mothers may know that their sons have been where they should not

have been." Observe how the action is accurately deduced from reason and law.

There stands the prohibition in the mist; and with patience we may penetrate the mist in the mind which placed it there. If the stranger (and strangers are not wanted; and the less the stranger they are) commit an imaginary offence, he might commit a real one. You have never shot the wrong stag, nor the right one, nor been within mountain ranges of desiring to do so. But you have committed trespass, if it is possible to commit the hypothetical. A little offence, according to your capacity, against good manners has been provided for you, and you have fallen into the trap. You have never from behind cut the throat of an exhausted park creature while dogs engaged it at the danger-point; nor coveted the filthy right to kill in that way. If not, keep your opinions to yourself; and, when the advice is given, *Keep to the Footpath; By Order.*

The following incident, if worth narration, requires some historical introduction, however slight. Peterhouse in 1644 expelled Crashaw;[6] but it did and has done better actions than that. Meantime, for tourists it is an attractive place; unfolding, as Cambridge colleges do, that which is more charming as the visitor penetrates; for one example, the bridge at John's, Peterhouse's cul-de-sac, is a garden; and in the garden were deer. Their names are Tonsi, Ponsi, and Fru. We (later called the trespassers) used to visit this garden. On the way we provided our pockets with little apples, probably Bath Beauties, with which to feed the deer, while we talked to the creatures, using an appropriate vocabulary. To us it was idyllic, to the deer of some profit; this use was made of venerable hospitality.

Flash, what a horrible truth to be revealed so unexpectedly; we were trespassing. The two who knew it became hot and cold, as the metaphor has it, *à tour de rôle.*[7] The dear third has brought from better times and further places a manner almost now her own, reserved for visits to Royal and Academical parks and gardens, of benevolent

interest in what has been provided by those who know best what to provide. So, while the two quakers wished for a door or crater to deliver them, the unconscious trespasser leisurely inspected the elms fourteen feet high with leaves fourteen inches long, the petunias, the yellow calceolarias.

What a man, the trespassee. All our real knowledge of him is in the form of hopes for his health and long happiness. For that time, at least, he was less a man than an interpreter. The instant he made his discovery, some governing or administrative body delegated to him the whole of its powers of conservancy and indignation. He presented at first an aspect of exasperated indecision, mixed with the purpose of complete, summary and continued vindication; at once he executed several steps only to be seen ordinarily at the time of the kermesse,[8] but for the present none of those of the Highland reel.[9] He pointed to the cardinal points of the compass, following the direction of the sun; and then reversed the gesture. Next with his features to one quarter of the universe and his four principle limbs controlling the remainder, he varied the series of movements in a manner which it would be categorical to describe, but which it was exquisite to behold, as torture was once said to be exquisite. He was evidently screaming upon notes above the audible register. It is rude to compare a European with a dervish;[10] and it would be unfeeling to deny that he was expressing emotion; but which, rather than the rest?

O corybant![11] He knew the garden to its very substance, as well as all the particulars of its maintenance; how many separate keys the lock obeyed; and so much beside, as the eloquence of his gyrations declared. Those people are in the wrong place; and he summoned justice and retribution, common and ideal, to correct the corrigible.

Just as we supposed that he was at the end of his gesticulation and that he must either repeat himself or desist, it became evident that he remembered, or had not forgotten, the vertical gestures; for he

showed the cloudless sky the ten points of his fingers and thumbs and the bluntness of his clenched hands alternately. He seemed to be, as it were, about to call upon Rhadamanthus;[12] when the party left the inclosure, and Tonsi, Ponsi, and Fru, gazing as though for representation on page eighteen of The Times.

Did you ever take a really deep breath; or wish to meet no countenance but those of paving stones? Peace by comparison seemed to radiate across the way from the outer walls of Pembroke;[13] and, looking up reverently at the barred window from which he descended hazardously into a barrel of water placed to receive him, we thought of the poet[14] who lived and was persecuted before the age of the cinema.

But who is fully regenerate; who is cultivated to the polish which is extreme, truly docile to the conventions? Plausible authors say that our happiest are not always our proudest moments. In our shame we experienced a quiver of joy.

When the party of trespassers returned to their sitting-room at the Bull[15] there was a gentleman looking critically over the books lying on the table. His indifference at the approach of other occupants of the hotel showed with what error he was infected; and part of his gesture of indifference was to indicate which was the chair of his choice. What would the reader have done? Have entered, perhaps, con brio;[16] shutting (or opening) the window with an illustrative bang?

In a story the new character would have been recognised as the Peterhouse choreograph. As an historical fact his beard was rather white than grey, and he looked like a poet laureate. It seemed to minds vividly impressed that here was no more than an instance of those rhythms in sentient life which are not so easily explained. A certain notice was pinned later to the door; but that it was *Trespassers will be Prosecuted; By Order* no one would believe.

"Dialogue"

Blackfriars, 9 (May 1928), 304–308.

"Dialogue" was inspired by the publication of J. A. H. Murray's A New English Dictionary on Historical Principles (now The Oxford English Dictionary), of which the first part (A–Ant) was published in 1884, but the last volume not until the year of this essay, 1928. The essential feature of the Dictionary is its historical method, by which the meaning and form of the words are traced from their earliest appearance on the basis of an immense number of quotations. Gray here exploits the playful possibilities of such a method. The result is a "dialogue" as rich in scholarly word-play as any work of high modernism.

In reprinting this piece, I have respected Gray's decision to use dashes rather than quotation marks to indicate a change of speaker. These add not only a certain typographical elegance (and originality) to the text, but also a playful fluidity. It is worth noting that a few years later, Joyce also refused "to allow the detestable system of inverted commas and punctuation [quotation] marks" to disfigure an edition of Ulysses then going through the press, preferring, as Gray does here, the "French system" of dashes to introduce quotations (Joyce to Paul Léon, 12 October 1932, National Library of Ireland, Dublin).

Dialogue

AVE a norange.

—Mon premier est un métal précieux;
Mon second est un habitant des cieux;
Mon tout est un fruit délicieux.[1]

—Yes; there's truth in that, and scarcely exaggeration. (John, fetch the N. E. D.,[2] article "orange.") It's too great, really; too round, too golden, too juicy, too Brangwyn,[3] too coster's barrow, too abundant.

—Augustine[4] consecrated it in an able image.

—Looking at it as segments compact in the cortex. We think of it as a bag of juice; a potable lawn-tennis ball. (What's it say, John?)

—"*Orange, orenge, narancia, arancia, naranza, naranja, laranja; mediaeval Greek, nerantzion.*"

—Push on.

—"*The fruit of a tree (see sense 2) a large, globose, many-celled berry* (Hesperidium) *with sub-acid juicy pulp, inclosed in a tough rind, externally of bright reddish yellow colour.*"

—Thattledoo.

—Globose. That dates Dr. Murray's[5] early education.

—You can hear the governess's voice: 'The form of the earth is oblate spheroid; in other words, like an orange. Now if I were to take a knitting needle,"

—pin, she meant, but don't let her go on. The earth, an orange: a globose fruit (which is what the N. E. D. means):

—(Look up "berry," John)

—the association is impressed in our minds.

—Should you think . . . .

—"*Berry. Any small globular or ovate fruit, not having a stone.*"

—Thattledoo. Should you think that geodesy[6] and the orange are practically contemporaneous?

—1497. *For bering the appill oreynzeis fra the schip.*

—It was regular merchandise in the middle ages; but I see the globose berry growing more delectable and less of a medicine as time passes . . . .

—"*1587. The rinde of the orrendge is hot, but the meate within it is cold.*"

. . . until China oranges (not of course the late little loose-jacketed counterfeit) and orange-wenches are on every tongue.

—"*Cries of York. Sweet China oranges, St. Michael's oranges I vend at one or two a penny.*"

—China orange, Portugal orange means simply sweet orange.

—I was thinking of Johnson[7] and the orange-peel.

—Do you know what he did with the orange-peel; or why he did it?

—Is it known?

—He believed powdered orange-peel taken in a glass of hot port wine to be a remedy for indigestion.

—Dirty draught; most unsatisfactory.

—Boswell[8] found the great man scraping the oil vessels from the rind; and teased him to know what he would do next; and Johnson teased him by refusing to say.

—Nothing about the port and the powder.

—Years later, Boswell tried another shot. "Sir, I have discovered a manufacture to a great extent of what you only piddle at—scraping and drying the peel of oranges.—Sir, I believe they make a higher

thing out of them than spirit. They make what is called orange butter, the oil of the orange inspissated, which they mix perhaps with common pomatum."[9]

—I prefer to leave the question where the doctor left it: that he kept his secret.

—Robespierre[10] knew what he was about.

—. . . ?

—His passion for oranges helped him to struggle with the bile which choked him.

—He needed plenty.

—And used them. The Duplays[11] kept a pyramid before him, which no one else was allowed to touch. You could see where he had sat at table by the piles of orange-peel.

—His innocent gluttony, I should say. China oranges, Apfelsine;[12] it's clearly eighteenth century.

—Yes; what Wolsey[13] carried was a fair orange.

(John, look up "pomander.")

—To smell when there were too many suitors.

—Or stench, or the pest.

—*"Pomaunder, pomamber, pommander, pome ambre, pome d' embre. From pome, apple (see pome) plus ambre, amber. A mixture of aromatic substances, usually made into a ball, and carried in a small box or bag in the hand or pocket, or suspended by a chain from the neck or waist."*

—Thattledoo.

—Wolsey's fair orange was emptied and stuffed with spices.

—*"1625. Fletcher.[14] Oh what a stinking thief is this? Tames street to him is a meer pomander."*

—But Mima's pomanders are of quite another design.

—Studded with cloves.

—She pierces the orange all over with a knitting pin.

—needle. And pegs in the cloves.

—"1558. *The Pommander of Prayer, wherein is contained many godly Prayers, whereunto are added certain Meditations, called St. Augustine's.*"

—You ought to say pomander.

—And you ought to say contemplate.

—I know I ought.

—You'll stay out of difficulties by rhyming with gander, as the sixteenth century did.

—Look, though, at the fruit as it lies there. Il n'est pas bête.[15] How the dish, both in form and colour, becomes it. What is the dish?

—Chinese.

—It's a visible object, the orange.

—It reaches four of the senses. The sight of it is not exhausted in what lies before us, satisfying as it is; there is its composition on the tree; the golden progress of its ripening. Im dunklen Laub die Gold-Orangen glühn.[16] The shining dark-green leaves do not fall; the lily-scented flowers are perennial. Left to reach its natural shape the tree is globular.

—Versailles.[17]

—If the trunk is sawn it yields golden wood susceptible of a rich polish.

—Scented?

—I wish I could say. The tree abounds in scents; its fruit in flavours. The orange caresses the touch, size, shape and texture.

—The inimitable Mr. Dickens. . . .

—We should talk into the next watch if we touched the epic poem Todgers.[18] There the rotting gold is atmosphere for Mercy and Charity Pecksniff.

—Corruptio optimi.[19]

—I know little literature on the subject.

—There's the Goethe line.[20]

—The young Tennyson did well with his matter derived from Theophrastus. The luscious fruitage clustereth mellowly sunset-ripen'd above the tree.[21]

—And older Tennyson suppressed the poem.

—There exists a quite execrable poem by some Pre-Raphaelite, perhaps Morris.[22] The feel of the fruit becomes important when, in the seasonal succession, we choose an orange to say: This shall be mine.

—Jaffa, nombril, California.

—One short fortnight produces the fruit—from Honduras; and the fifty weeks are relatively blank. The Honduras orange is not globose, but a sphere. Its rind is yellow, smooth, thin. The colour inside is darker than lemon. Its scent leans to citron. The taste is dilute, delicious. It indicates in all particulars the marks of the ideal orange. The rough, thick-skinned, orange-coloured, globose varieties are more, as the Chinese say, for show at feasts.

—Wright, who hated oranges, only liked them with a thick skin. While the reader was pulling his feet out of the caramel of some work of reputed history, only to stick them in again, he would exhibit from across the refectory, for me alone, a portrait of the American rector, with his artificial teeth outside his face and all.

—You'll have one. John has laid the right knives.

—How am I going to eat it?

—Cut it through the equator, then across the poles; then imagine you are a meritorious negro.

Park: a fantastic story

London: Sheed and Ward, 1932

Park was originally serialized in installments in Blackfriars, 12 (November 1931), 682-95; 13 (January 1932), 45-51; 13 (March 1932), 158-63; 13 (April 1932), 231-42. It was subsequently reprinted: Park: a fantastic story, edited with an introduction by Bernard Bergonzi (Aylesford, Kent: St. Albert's Press, 1966); Park: A Fantastic Story, edited with an introduction by Philip Healy (Manchester: Carcanet Press, 1984).

As a book, Park was printed at Gray's own expense by the small art-press of René Hague and Eric Gill at Pigotts, near Hughenden in Buckshire, and published by Sheed and Ward. One of the early publications from Pigotts, Park is printed in the Joanna Italic which had been specially designed for the Press by Gill. It is also illustrated by a copperplate designed by Denis Tegetmeier and printed by Collins & Dear, London. Gray himself probably oversaw at least some of the printing of the book, as he made frequent visits to the utopian commune founded by Gill, which in some aspects served as a model for the utopian community of the novel.

At this time Gray was experimenting with unconventional typography, such as the use of the dash to mark the changes of speaker in "Dialogue." In Park, he simply does away with any mark indicating direct speech: not only quotation marks, single or double, but also the dash. As this eccentricity appears in the original installments in Blackfriars (in which just over a third of the final book was serialized), it was clearly Gray's express intention from the very first. In this, he may well have been influenced by Gill, who also had pronounced views on the subject, as set out in An Essay in Typography only the preceding year.

For this reason, I have chosen to reproduce the eccentricities of the original as nearly as possible, including the exclusion of all quotation marks to indicate direct

speech as well as the capitalization of the initial words of each new section. These typographical oddities greatly effect the speed and rhythm with which the novel is read and contribute both to its sense of unity and complexity.

Sources for Park are many and varied. In terms of biography, Gray's walks through his "holiday ground" of the Cotswolds contributed much of the landscape and the opening and closing scenes. As noted in my introduction, the historical Mungo Park (1771-1806), a Scottish explorer who disappeared while on a journey to find the sources of the Niger, is significant, not only for the details that Gray drew from Park's account of his initial journey (Travels into the Interior of Africa, 1799), but also because of the mystery surrounding his disappearance on his second expedition.

In terms of Gray's life, I tend to read the story as an attempt by the author in the last years of his life to achieve a coherent identity, an attempt which singularly fails. It should also be noted that Gray's sister thought that Park originated as the transcription of an actual dream (see Sewell, Dorian Mode, p. 166). Thus, as Utopian experiments, such as that of Eric Gill's at Ditchling Common and then Pigotts, in which the inhabitants lived out their Catholicism as Third Order Dominicans (or "Blackfriars," as they were commonly called), certainly contributed to the fantasy. There is also a school of opinion that the whole piece is a satire on the then current situation within the local Catholic diocese (see Sewell, Dorian Mode, p. 166). Certainly private jokes are part of the story (who else could A Ra be, if not André Raffalovich?). Thus, as Zaina comments, "the reader is constantly fidgeted by the feeling that some esoteric joke is being played on him, the sense of which just escapes him" (p. 97).

Literary sources are canvassed by Zaina, pp. 95-96, Healy, pp. 118-21 and McCormack, pp. 243 ff.

Park: a fantastic story

MUNGO PARK walked on in the belief, absurd as he knew it to be, that he had died. There are catastrophes (so he assured himself) where the victim need not add to his perplexity the pain of suspending his judgment. And this hypothesis was some relief to him here and now—if, as in his anguish he thought, it is here & is now. He dismissed as impertinent his own critical question: when did it happen and where and how?

One thing at a time, he answered himself. For he wanted no more than a mind sufficiently at ease to draw inferences from the evidence of his bewildered senses.

He did not deny that he felt well. All his reactions were perfect; he had no physical pain; his breathing was right; there was not the least irritation on any part of his skin; no blister, fly-bite, soreness; his clothes, hat, boots seemed ideally part of himself. His stick hung on his wrist; he could hear his watch ticking. He verified, by touching the places, that his many pockets held their expected contents.

But he felt alone in a vast world. He could hear no sounds other than those produced by himself and his belongings; his footsteps and the faint noise of his salivation, the rustling of his clothes. It was such silence as, when on a still frosty morning a man is sitting on a hillside, will make him say two audible words only to hear his own voice, and be sure that he has not become suddenly deaf.

He was on the Oxford road, going eastward; and he had just come up from Burford by the slanting way.[1] He had lunched there and looked about; in fact, when he was startled, he was repeating to himself with amusement a quotation upon the Cary monument:

"And plenteousness in their palaces".[2] It had suddenly struck him that the road was just faintly different. The part surfaced for wheel traffic was narrower; the rest, great breadth, was grassy gallops. And the telegraph posts were absent. He shuddered with misery.

Dream? Nonsensical question. No one asks it in a dream. One hundred times nonsensical. He moved to the grass; and, looking at the flowering plants, named them: betony, lady's bedstraw, fennel.

He took a few steps towards the hedge: and then he heard a note, sweet and prolonged, as of a flute. He stood still and it stopped. He took another step or two & the instrument spoke again, at an harmonic interval. He stopped and went on; and always with the same result. Someone he could not see was observing his movements minutely. With all his attention absorbed by the experience, but not in any way unpleasantly, he walked on; until at an instant there were in his legs innumerable points of pain. He tottered and fell. He had been well peppered. His last controlled thought was that the metaphor was good. The sweat stood all over him; he just waited, smarting dreadfully.

A slight, powerful man came towards him. This was delirium; but he had no power to deal with the question. The young man was a negro; and dressed as unexpectedly. The costume was right and logical enough; but of design, colour & materials such as he had never seen in combination.

The man spoke an unheard tongue. It was evidently short, sympathetic questions; and the voice was attractive. Mungo Park stared at him without a word and closed his eyes. With this action he relaxed all his muscles and lay like a rag. The nozzle of a flask came against his lips and he took a draught of its contents.

Deo gratias, said he, automatically.

Potui te gravius vulnerare, said the voice. Mungo Park sprang to a sitting posture with astonishment, relief, dignity, indignation.

Tu me vulnerasti?

Et non alius.

Eccur?

Nonne audisti sibillam?

Sibilla? Quae est ista?[3]

The young man pulled round an instrument which he had slung to him, the very form of which was a sufficient explanation. It was a cluster of shepherd's pipes attached to a windbag, a home-made looking thing, with a charm of age or handle or both about it. Bent on demonstration, he blew up the bag; and then, with delicate orange-tipped fingers, produced the harmonic sounds, but this time as a merry tune. Mungo Park felt wretched again.

Nil timendum, said the man with a slight accent of reproof. Veni.

Non possum ambulare.

Age. Veni.[4] He held out his hands and tugged Mungo Park to his feet: then he strode off as though he were alone, and his prisoner struggled after him.

There was no door to the doorway of the cabin, a heavily constructed building, the wooden elements by far too strong, and prodigally spacious as the residence of one man. It smelt inside of fields & woods. There was a couch, heavily built too, with a dark leather mattress and a neck rest.

The man pulled off his cap, which he threw on a shelf, displaying thick black hair, straight & glossy. He spread a textile rug on the mattress & smoothed it swiftly. The broad stripes of dark blue and red were to become familiar. Mungo Park willingly obeyed the invitation to stretch himself upon it.

The young man moved about, looked out, came back, sat on a stool,

stood up, muttered, looked out again. Then he addressed to Park a rattle of remarks in his own tongue.

Dic latine.

Dixi mysterium; et iterum dico.

Unde noscis Latinam?

Est lingua sacra.[5]

Park relapsed into wild thoughts, and groaned.

Nil timendum, the black repeated; and passed into a room beyond, where he began a one-sided conversation, at first hesitating, then voluble, interminable. When he came back he said:

Accersitus.[6]

As the negro turned his back, Park walked firmly into the apartment where he had heard him go to speak, & advanced with the courage of a racked man going to be beheaded; his legs were painful. The appearance of the little room was a distraction in its strangeness. It was a small octagonal. The walls were of different hues, and rippled each at a different angle. It was finished atop by eight convergent triangles; it was like being inside a big crystal. A solid stool was structured with the floor, all one wood; and a furniture settle, or table, had on it a quantity of untidy blank paper & a metal style.

A soft note recalled his attention & there came staccato words: Ra tete ra. He returned no answer. The signal & words were repeated.

Adsum, said he, stupidly.

Bene; faveas. He sat down. Followed unintelligible words.

Intellexisti?

Minime.

Tu quis es?

Kentigernus Park Scoticus.

Faveas voces custodem.[7] He clapped his hands in answer to this request, and the negro came in and took the seat.

Take a handful of those sheets, said he in Latin, and write down your own replies. Then he spoke in Bapama,[8] but at a chosen pitch, facing squarely to one of the panels; and a long dialogue followed as at first.

Now then, he said to Park, be clear and brief. What is your name? And so, perhaps for twenty minutes, he performed the tedious office of interpreter. His fatigue and anxiety were shown in the increasing obsequiousness with which he transmitted the replies, often evidently considered most unsatisfactory, and the increasing sharpness with which he elicited them.

He smiled when the ordeal was over, and his eyes shone boyishly.

A whole set of relations and implications came in an instant to Park's mind: that integrity of many elements which at any moment of this recent period he had had no hope of recovering.

I am convalescent, was his first reflection. The signal went, & the black did all that he expected him to do. He was absent a long time; and Park now cared as little as he knew what he was answering about.

Let him, said he; I'll give that lad something to think about, and make him wiser.

The black returned without any remark or legible expression on his features. Park fixed him and asked (in English):

What's your name?

The black hesitated and answered:

Cuan.

It's like a dog, thought Park.

Dic mihi, Joannes . . .

Non licet.

Dic tamen . . . [9]he commanded angrily.

Cuan spoke volubly in Bapama, and would not be stopped by word or gesture. Park looked at him with patient hostility & presently said:

Nihil metuendum. Cuan became at once, and remained, villainously silent. He was called and came back.

Vocatus. Park hobbled with great difficulty to the speaking room and sat down.

Ades?

Adsum.

Mox locuturus est Reverendissimus Dominus Thomas a Villa Gracili S.T.D. a secreto Amplitudinis suae vicarii generalis dioceseos Kottatilensis. Esne paratus? Intellexisti?

Ita.[10]

It is a dream, thought Park, abandoning all his hypotheses, as he heard the exceeding sweetness of the voice which paraphrased the message just received and went on:

Salve, Domne Hospes, prospera sint tibi omnia, et aeternaliter.[11]

Fluently, courteously, with the slowness of a cultured man, the speaker elicited a really rational account of Park's person, antecedents, present conditions and—perplexities.

I have a certain theory about you, but you must volunteer the information.

It is correct, said Park.

But say it.

I am a priest.

Face the blue plate & stare at it. Park did so. Shapes quivered upon it and presently settled to a picture. It showed an interior like a room in a London club, as to human figures acting independently. The

foreground figure was a big bust of a man in monastic dress. He was black. He put his hood off his head with a natural gesture and smiled, and the plate became blue again. Park faced the speaking plate and the voice went on:

I was going to say goodnight: but I will make a few remarks to you which will not be recorded. You will receive your formal instructions later. First, be quite at rest in your mind. We shall certainly take charge of you. Stay where you are contentedly. You are a prisoner, but only of your own undertakings. The less you move and speak the more convenient. Do not let the fact distress you: but it is as well for you to know that you are the cause of hideous excitement throughout the world. It is through no fault of yours; but the trouble is very great. So caute, cautissime.[12] Treat the gamekeeper as what he is. When you see him, say to him: "Ta'at ng'on"; it means "Faith of a slave"; & give him your blessing. I will do the rest, if indeed anything else is required. Then send him to me. Excuse me further; for we shall be busy all night about you. Be well. The man will do all he can. Make him teach you some useful phrases of the common tongue; he is well educated. Memento memoris. Vale.[13]

Park had no time to linger on what he had heard. But he restrained his hurry and went back.

Cuan showed signs of misgiving.

Ta'at ng'on The poor fellow threw himself flat on his face. Benedictio Dei omnipotentis, Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti, descendat super te, et maneat semper, said the priest; and he knelt erect.

Amen.

Accersitus.[14]

The game-keeper sprang to his feet, blessed himself, clasped his hands at the height of his face so hard that they shook, & dashed into the speaking room. When he went his skin was slate-colour and his eyes seemed plates of flat dull copper: but he came back looking as

usual & morally, if not quite, restored. He had his hand before his mouth as though by force to keep his words inside it, and the thought expressed by his upturned eyes was laughably transparent: Thank God I have not spoken a word. Park had to restrain himself not to feel like a sultan.

Cuan helped this unconsciously by the swift silence with which he passed and repassed, innumerably busy. He noticed his guest's fagged look: and brought officiously just the portfolio stand the Parks have seen in all ages. But the portfolio which he placed upon it!

The plates were metal, perhaps zinc, polished in different degrees according to the design, large enough for life-size heads, which was in fact their subject. The drawing was incised in thick, masterly lines; and laid in the spaces were coloured surfaces, well within the drawing; these were enamel, inlaid metal and pieces of shell, put there by pressure, fusion or setting as the substance might require. Hair in the portraits was treated as in good Gothic sculpture, & such accidents as moles, rather frequent, and scars, more rare, were evidently much valued by the designers.

All the portraits were of men; and all the horses (for horses there were) were stallions. Park had never mastered the horse; but he could see well enough that the creatures represented had been marvellously trained; or, what was the same thing, were so admitted to friendship with their masters that they knew of themselves how to stand for portraiture; and could speak if they chose. They might indeed by some miracle have become fully domesticated like the sheep-dog.

Dogs; what brutes these were; they were horrible; mastiffs, blood-hounds, bull-dogs were regimental emblems in comparison. Park thought he would come back to them later & turned all the dog plates.

At the next he almost gave a cry; pure David Jones.[15] It was a scene of hunt animals at all planes & angles; no bother about scale; little

wild horses and big ibexes, cheetahs and gazelles with their natural characters superbly emphasized.

Cuan showed his face. He saw that he was not called; but he came on, persuasively. He had changed his clothes and had nothing but a cotton tunic, breech-cloth and white sandals.

As though he were a nurse he lifted Park as he was, & carried him to a bath. There he stripped him and togaed him up in a sheet of the red and blue stripe; but not before he had looked with compassion at the miserable state of his legs, so swollen and discoloured where the saltpetre,[16] or whatever it was, had damaged them. He touched the skin delicately, and sighed.

He went away and presently was hard at it in the speaking room. He came back with compressed lips; he laid Park on a table, made him easy with towels; and then, with a lye he had prepared, did him all over and mopped him half dry. He oiled him until he smelt like a herbarium,[17] artistically sponging off the drops where they formed; then in a jolly wooden bowl as big as a wastepaper basket he made another lye, which, applied, turned the ointment to soap.

With grimaces and gestures he expressed: You must try to walk down into the water; for you are so slippery that I should let you fall.

He went down first to arrange the sunk furniture; on this he made his bather comfortable with his face just above the surface of the water.

Lying without sensation in the tepid bath he watched Cuan, who, besides, was taking trouble that all his movements should be closely inspected, separating and assembling all the things which had been on his body and would never be there again. He could see that it was a sort of mausoleum rite which was being performed; that somewhere in the then world there must be a museum vault waiting for its prey. He saw in his own suit and other clothes, in his purse, watch, map, tobacco, handkerchief, rosary, pencil, knife, scapular medal,

keys, the pathos of stiffened clouts and trays of venerable rubbish often seen behind glass. He noted the absence of his hat and stick; and had the strange illusion that they were at x leagues and y years of distance, irretrievable.

Cuan built all to a rectangular shape which satisfied him; and then fetched a copper box with a flange lid. He examined the inside & invited Park to do the same. He laid all the belongings in it, adding only a bullet of what was nothing but camphor. So there's trade with the Philippine Islands, thought Park.

He came out of the water; was dried & wrapped in the striped sheet.

Cuan looked most foolishly like a woman handling clothes & household fittings wisely; he had the queer gestures of testing the transparency of a towel; impatient hurtling of a cloth round & round as though to discover its cardinal points; firm choice of one rather than the other of two indistinguishable objects.

He wiped and dried the shampooing table and draped it with a cloth. He placed the pile of clothing, looking shop-new, and stood attentive. Park watched and Cuan waited. At length almost inaudibly:

Benedicite.[18] And Park blessed the clothes.

With reverence & tenderness, and yet with servile authority, for the ritual was a mixture of vesting a bishop and dressing a baby, he touched Park with each garment, & deftly wound it, or hung and disposed it, as its use demanded.

Park thought of the priests of the old law[19] as he made mental notes for dressing himself in the future.

The dress felt togalike, and as if the last miracle would be that it stayed on. It was not however quite complete. Cuan bandaged his feet with a dark green scarf, prepared like a puttee.[20] It left the toes free, turned the heel dexterously, and stopped with a tuck. Shoes over this.

Then Cuan was crestfallen. He saw that the buskins could not be

worn. Park had the vanity to be sorry, for they were of white-enamelled leather, decorated with a green line.

Then came a broad woven belt passed through the fold of a half-pendant of this toga behind to the front. It had five tails at each end to make a fastening. The general effect of what the servant did with these ten tails was to plait them; but this is a gross description. Speaking generally of his residence in Ia, and the resemblances and differences which struck Park in making the comparisons forced upon him by his experiences, while certain objects, like baskets, barrels, cheeses, showed a stability which nothing could upset, there were principles which seemed unfathomable; among them, fastenings. Park, after long observation and practice, after frequent and humiliating tuition, learnt a few for use; but, wherever he went, his imbecility in this particular weighed upon him; exposing him to the witticisms of Dlar, and the respectful staring of many.

Last a collar was laid round his neck. It passed under a pocket of the garment left by skilful draping, which Cuan drew over his head in a hood.

Attached to the collar was a superb medal which, from its appearance, & especially the fine workmanship, Park took to be gold. It must have been four inches across. It represented the Deipara.[21] Owing to the intricate folds of her draperies, there must have been a thousand different surfaces, all of which were treated separately with enamel. Round about was an inscription in Roman characters—& strangely Park thought this the most astonishing novelty.

He made out at a glance: INVENTA SUM ERGO DEIPARA IMMACULATA.[22]

Recognizing the most entrancing of anagrams, I am mad all right, he reflected; but he smiled with resignation.

Park's custom, from the seminary at least, had been to take the food set before him; and as to liquor, though he liked it, he was satisfied

if there was what he considered harmony between the beaker and its contents; and asked no more:

What—if the wine impart a golden tinge

To thought—what skills the colour of the wine?*

When his meal was finished, taken at the couch where he had first reclined, Cuan stood before him as though waiting for a signal; Park wondered how he knew the time so accurately. There was a tremour in everything and then a hush as though the earth had stopped breathing.

Hora precum, said the man, though all things said the same. Park, thinking he heard him say "Jube, Domine, benedicere",[23] went on with Sunday compline, in which Cuan joined.

Preparation for the night consisted chiefly of making Park comfortable where he lay. Cuan asked him if he wished to see the stars; and drew away the ceiling, showing a blue parallelogram of sky, which flooded his consciousness with an ocean of longing & regret, and at the same time soothed it unutterably. I do not speculate, Park with emphasis resolved, upon this world, its age or its human government. Certain things show signs of security; but I deduce nothing. But if tomorrow . . . He found himself already beginning to form wishes and velleities, and cut the process short.

Tomorrow! It has either gone or will never be; detestable point of imaginary time.

At an age when nights are often broken, and if a man has had the wisdom to make the best of that condition, he may feel in the morning benefit as though each of his forty sleeps[24] had been effective sleep; and should he relish his dreams, queer or evil, he has, before the magical night has faded into the day of real pains and dangerous responsibilities, a few minutes' sense of enrichment. Park stared at the stars from his couch. He knew, so feeble was his astronomy, that it would have to be Cassiopeia or Ursa major,[25] or

*"Pash zezel tiffen", says the Wapama proverb: the darkest wine illuminates.

some part of those constellations for him to have any pleasure of recognition. No. He wished obstinately that a particular star should be the pole-star.

In which case . . . he started ratiocinating . . .

He slept a minute; for the stars had moved only a diameter, or "twenty four hours & a minute", said he; and slept again. The stars appear to have a circular motion; & the pole-star . . . & he slept again. No, he was wide & wild awake, and fetched a horrible curve in stellar space. He became loosened from his couch which took a curve of its own.

I shall never be back in time, he groaned. I shall never be back in time. Every thought has two meanings. If not back in time, in what shall I be back? Shall I ever be back? "Ever" is a property of time, & I shall never be back in time. Every thought has multiple meanings. I shall never be back in time. So he shut his eyes, and when he opened them he was back.

Yes, but am I back in time? What was that about the two kinds of time? I know. Cuan; the stars.

He could hear the voice of Cuan in the speaking room; but whether impatient or obsequious he could not make out.

Then he heard the man's voice near him; speaking in a piteous whisper:

Dormis, Domne? ignosce mihi. Tristitia affectus, somno fractus, nescio quid amplius. Da mihi mandatum ut dormiam . . .

Habes mandatum.[26] And he himself went to sleep; sleep, as it were, & no more nonsense. The vision he had had, as pleasing & reassuring as it was surprising, upon the eggshell blue plate in the speaking room furnished the nucleus of his fancies. He thought that he was lying on his face in grass, and that it was Thursday, and that on Thursday people were black. He woke and smiled. It wasn't Thurs-

day; it was the Assumption[27] and a Wednesday; therefore people are as usual.

His clothes and coverings were strange.

Oh, aye, said he; better asleep; and he slept.

He was in Westminster Cathedral[28] and it was also a railway station of intolerable vastness & silence. A church has chairs, vaulting; these provided abominations on the floor and overhead. A station has taxicabs, advertisements, kiosks, angles. What a wilderness of these features. There was a covered lorry with a stupid bill pasted on its hood: "G.S.R.[29] Man is omnivorous". The lorry became multiplied to infinity in dreary perspective, the alignment perfect like an army-train or a boy's drawing. Park went down the line in his vestments looking for the sacristy and a third-class smoking compartment. He had lost his server and his railway porter. I shall recognize him, for he is black. An unending train went through, pouring out passengers without stopping; all were negroes.

Park halted and addressed himself prophetically:

Go through the swinging glass doors; no one will notice you, as you are black. With a wrench and a struggle he came to himself.

That is a strange thing, he thought; to dream a fact I did not know awake. I am black.[30]

It was light; he was chilly, for he had perspired copiously; his chin & neck were soaked. There were horses outside; he could hear the clink through the open ceiling.

In some way he divined that the horses were for himself, and he experienced one of those miserable minutes all must have known. He remembered with dread the lively expressions of the horses he had looked at in the portfolio of engravings; and at the same time that the state of his legs would prevent his attempting to ride. With

rage he sprang from the couch, and his legs were well. He had common thoughts of bathing and shaving.

Cuan came in carrying a great cloak and a helmet. He spoke some fossil sentence, some "good morning" or other; & Park repeated a syllable or two as he heard them. Evidently a start was intended.

He made to put on his shoes. Cuan did it for him, and laced them. He walked towards one of the panels of the room; the man slid it open and he passed out of doors. He could not see the horses, but there was Cotswold, earth & sky; the familiar golden soil and cool green, the coloured pattern of fields, crop, stubble, grazing, early ploughing; hedges of quick, draped with clematis and tangled with black bryony. The eastern sky was a dense formation of thin, horizontal clouds. Cuan pulled and straightened his clothes, and laid the great cloak on his shoulders, clasping it at the neck. He handed him the helmet, dull black papier mâché with a badge painted on the front. There were pendant chains as straps. Cuan just tied them, a "single knot"; the chain held. Then he took up all the back folds of the wide cloak, dropped it half and half over his two shoulders and led the way. The cloak which Cuan wore was draped in the same way, with the odd effect; and held so by a loop at the tail fastened to a button at the neck. The horses turned their heads to stare at the two men.

Cuan held the stirrup and Park mounted. When he saw what Cuan did, he threw the folds of his cloak off his shoulders, so that it enveloped himself and part of the horse. He required in fact no riding freedom: the mount was practically a pack-horse, and responsive to the least wish of the rider.

They rode in a southerly direction, so that Park expected to go near Eastleach,[31] but checked himself remembering his resolve. They took the fields straight on, for the hedges were filled with gaps. He saw horses grazing, but neither sheep nor cattle. He distinguished houses from farms.

Dwelling houses were highly characterized, long, low, vast, with very broad eaves and a fancy shown for balconies and circular windows. He found later that the lighting was principally top-lighting, & in public buildings concealed lighting. But the farms, with modifications easily imagined, and what seemed to Park a note of splendour, were typical farms: with barns, sheds, pens; paddocks and orchards, abundant evidence of the invisible farmer's wife in the rabble of poultry; & flower gardens barricaded like a king's park.

They came to a road and took the right.

Hot, hot, said the groom. The horses came abreast & trotted. Park felt exhilarated.

Quomodo vocatur equus?

Tsup.

Equi?

Bini vocantur Zup; plurimi Ssup.

Equitare?

Tsuba, zuba, ssuppa, juxta placitum.[32]

They rode a stream; the horses galloped, seeing their destination ahead.

IT WAS A BUILDING in its way arrestingly sumptuous: a two-stage rotunda with a flattened dome, all of stonework, laboriously dressed and masoned, designed with consummate art. At a handsome distance from its base was a circuit of low wall with many gate openings. The whole stood in a splendid area of well-kept grass, and there were no paths visible. Round the upper and smaller stage of the building ran an inscription course. From the portion exposed to his view Park reconstructed the words of the psalm: Laudate pueri Dominum, laudate nomen Domini.[33] There were a few men sitting on the

coping, dressed in what could only have been liveries. They rose to their feet in silence as the horsemen rode into the enclosed space.

The groom led the horses away & Park followed Cuan through one of the circular doorways into a foyer. A servant took their cloaks, helmets & whips, and glanced to see if they had spurs or weapons.

By different doorways in the inner wall Park and his men entered the rotunda.

It was a relief to Park to recognize that he was in a sacred building. He felt his reason was being saved. Kneeling men moved sufficiently for his accommodation. He knelt, blessed himself, and spoke to God as a man does.

His desire was to be as little distracted as possible, but he soon detected that men in choir, certainly below somewhere, and probably at a prodigious depth, were singing none.[34]

It was approaching the prayer. He heard the great clang of a bell, & the sound of a subterranean sea, as somewhere a multitude rustled together. A choir pealed, whence he could not determine: Ecce sacerdos magnus.[35]

He rose to his feet: and could then see over the rather broad parapet where his arms had rested. He was one of many occupying a hung gallery at the spring of a cupola; it was just as it were a circular pew, for one row of men, with its seat & kneeler. The cupola leaped from the summit of another much greater and far down in the earth; & that again was supported by piers. A part of the ultimate floor at a still greater depth was brightly illuminated. This was the sanctuary; for the procession of the mass moved towards it. It was cut by the unbroken ascending line of some great element of the building and in another direction by a traverse as austere. He could see the bishop at the faldstool[36] however; his ministers moving in ample space, and with utmost solemnity & precision, as they vested him.

This was all, at the distance, which could edify or gratify him, until

two deacons passed the chasuble[37] over the bishop's head, and Park was certain, beyond any contradiction, that it was close-sewn with diamonds.

The mass proceeded exactly as anyone can verify anywhere, raised however to the scale to which the reader of this relation has grown accustomed. It ended with the publication of an indulgence in the sacred language (as the Wapami call Latin) and the vulgar tongue; and this afforded Park's first opportunity of hearing Bapama spoken with some deliberation. It made no impression upon him; he tried without success to catch the equivalent expression of a hundred days. One feature had struck his imagination: all had knelt for the credo, & tens of thousands, at any rate, had united in singing it.

Park had made a curious observation at the mass. He was sure the bishop was white: for the prelate had distinctly raised his face as he sat at the faldistorium;[38] and, though he would not admit it to himself, he believed that it was in his own direction.

As the three rode away, he could not keep the subject out of his mind, and he addressed to Cuan many remarks tinged by this curiosity.

At last the man said, frowning slightly, and low, as if scandalized:

My lord observed that the bishop is a pale man?

Yes.

God is no respecter of persons. It is not an uncommon thing (changing the subject as quickly and thoroughly as he could) on a great feast to breakfast at a club.

You are my guide.

My lord would agree not to make friends or even to speak?

Yes.

And to leave the club at the first signal from me: ng'on n'tha (I am only a servant).

Yes. What is the dedication of that church?

The martyrs of Uganda.[39]

Benedictus Deus.[40]

Amen. Yonder is the club.

Park looked in the direction of Cuan's whip; and laughed with pleasure and amusement as they drew near, at the extraordinary mass of horses and gorgeously dressed men.

His pleasure however was soon clouded; for his appearance created a stir, which the utmost politeness of the gamekeepers and stableboys (for such they all were) could not disguise.

Many moved to surround Cuan, but he shook them off.

He made for a fat black and spoke to him aggrievedly.

The giant smiled and patted Cuan on the shoulder; but he led the way, and in quick time Park was reclining on a prepared couch and left to his thoughts. These would have been dismal had not the nimblest smiling black he could have imagined bustled up with a tray which he thrust into Park's hands without ceremony.

Instantly he splayed the feet of a folding tripod he had under his arm, snatched the tray, planted it on the stand and stood grinning. It was evident from his expression that he was supposed to be amusingly got up. Park smiled and the boy went away pleased.

He, at any rate, hasn't heard of the man-in-the-moon,[41] he thought gloomily. But the breakfast was good. It was a delicate fry of some sort of liver, on a big thin barley biscuit, a bowl of salted water, and an orange. He had hardly finished his meal when Cuan appeared ready for riding and spoke a sentence in Bapama in which Park was proud to recognize the word ssup.

What a relief to be gone. Oh, the glory of the unchangeable sky, the gladness of the grass, the restorative view of hawkweed, scabious,

calamint; the row of elms; and an addition, in Park's eye not at all unacceptable, of grey poplar, the fancy of a local proprietor, perhaps; for the disposition indicated planting; the ash, too, appeared abundant.

The line they took was as straight as they chose, for there was no standing crop in the way; and there were passages innumerable in the hedges.

There was at home a parcel for Park; a copper box, namely; and lying on it, his first mail: a meticulously folded note. It was from Monsignor Villa Gracil; & the writing was microscopic, artistically disposed on the sheet. Beside the compliments d'usage,[42] its purport was—for it was easy & fraternal: I send some odds and ends. Have patience; I have so little. Speak to me p.m. I am called in familiar conversation Svillig. Park made an experiment in trying to think Wapama. He means to express, he surmised, that he is frightfully busy and is impatient to see me; and also that I am to hold on until "they" have made up their minds about me.

In the order of spiritual and intellectual value the contents of the box were: a breviary for the week (from which it appeared that today was Saturday); a crucifix of mature design in which (so naturally) the divine Victim was of negro type; a grammar of Bapama, in the Bapami language and character; a Bapamu-Latin (and vice versa) dictionary; a book of views in a kind of lithography; a map of Great Britain; abundance of handmade paper, a block of Chinese ink, a few brushes and four reed pens.

Once his emotions [were] under control, Park unfolded the map. He looked for the place where he supposed himself to be; & at the point found a red dot. It was Svillig's doing; for here and there were translations into Latin, in his handwriting, of the unintelligible words engraved. The country in which the dot appeared was called Regio principis Ednae. Kottatil, on both sides of the Severn estuary, was marked: urbs nostra. London was in the Hertfordshire direction

and called Ito. The whole of Devon & Cornwall[43] was forest; &, so far as the map showed—for a word crossed it firmly in heavy characters which Svillig had translated conclusa—quite uninhabited. The whole, saving these explanations, was one bewilderment of straight lines, ragged forms and unknown signs.

Park stared at it all sadly: but brightened when he saw in the minute script, somewhere about Lincolnshire,[44] the words Villa gracilis indicating a small property.

As he folded the map Cuan came in & he asked him the time. The man pointed to a horizontal scale on which an indicator was moving clock-wise to the right. The bar had six great divisions, which equalled together a third of the solar day. When the indicator reached its course, it ran back with a distinctive murmur, not to zero, but to the first of the strokes representing the smallest sub-division (for it took just the time of one "second" to run). The result was that, when the indicator stood midway on the scale, the time was (in our horology) noon, eight in the evening, or four in the morning. At the moment it wanted about a division to noon.*

Park worked a long hour extracting from the dictionary a Bapama-English vocabulary; with frequent questioning of Cuan when he was present.

For Cuan was busily doing housework. He had a subordinate whom he kept out of sight, perhaps to spare Park the mortification of seeing a pale man in a menial position. Cuan did not mean too much by it when he said ng'on n'tha.

At noon he told Cuan to call Monsignor Villa.

*This is one example of the discord between Wapama numeration and that which prevails in the world in the twentieth century. Its intricacies will be shunned in this relation, and precision often sacrificed to a general intelligibility. The Wapami use the week of seven days and lunar months. Spare days are dies non and extra festivals.

With the most charming mixture of politeness & familiarity the speaker talked over with Park the events of day, the contents of the box, the beauty of the season, the miseries of life.

You were at the high mass at the martyrs?

Is the martyrs a big church as churches go?

Well, yes. Did you recognize the assistant priest? I saw you; but I have uncommon eyesight.

Much, if not quite all, is very strange to me.

Tell me, Drak,[45] have you everything you wish?

No. Park heard him laugh.

Of course not. Is there anything we can do for you?

You mean relatively small things?

Yes.

Well, Svillig, I need to be shaved.

Ah, precisely; that is a point. We want you to grow a beard. Please do not be grieved.

I am sorry.

We shall try to make it up to you for that and other inevitable sorrows. How old are you?

59.

Ah.

My beard will be grey if only with age.

Ah.

What did you say?

Are your parents living? Park could not answer.

Drak, I am an imbecile. I would come to see you, but the order is strict.

Do get permission and come.

You are to come here at the earliest possible moment. A condition is that you know quite a good deal of Bapami. I will try to send you a tutor. Stare at the blue plate.

The vision was not Svillig, but an old man with infinite wrinkles on his kind face, and a tiny fluff of white hair. Park showed his surprise; and from the expression on the plate he knew that the vision was mutual. The old man made a casual gesture of benediction and disappeared.

The vicar-general, said Svillig. Vale.

NO ONE could wish Park to recall the miseries of weeks which followed. The tutor soon appeared. He was a religious, & aged. He had the ways of a Cistercian.[46] His principal business remained prayer, God reward him; & his pupil profited by his example in this particular. His duty of tutoring Park he seemed to regard as a species of agriculture or forestry. Whenever the pupil attempted a distraction he would resume with vigour and authority:

Pay attention to the passive; it is most irregular; and perhaps for that reason little used by the uneducated. Or:

Mind the dual of this noun; it is very peculiar. Or:

Quick, stir your brains, give me the accusatives; look alive: gaping nostrils, odd ears (wrong, get it right), bandy legs (come on), short stilts, an unequal marriage, blind twins, ugly brother and sister, quarrel between friends, blue eyes, a one-legged man.

ON ALL SOULS' day—[47]& he detected some dim allusion to release

from purgatory in the selection of this for his first introduction to men at large—he went to a great cemetery where Svillig, whom he had often seen surreptitiously, introduced him to a multitude of people.

At sundown began a booming bell. All stood uncovered, reciting, inter se, the De profundis[48] with incredible slowness. The psalm and the bell stopped simultaneously.

There is a foundation near here, said Svillig, where, by special and ancient indult,[49] mass for the dead is said continuously; do you grasp my meaning?

I think so.

And nobody knows (except, of course, a cob-web of erudition like you) why.

It drives me nearly mad . . . Park was beginning. Svillig hated reminiscences; and always detected them before they were born.

It doesn't matter, said he.

Yes it does, answered Park.

It does not, he rejoined; for all pale men are on the verge of madness; & (as you would say) discourse is wasted on certainties; and he laughed his irresistible laugh.

Come along, said he; there's a jolly supper, goslings and cider.

I say, where do we stay to-night?

That's good too; we're staying with a doctor.

What of?

Medicine, he said, with a look of feigned innocence. I won't say who it is, as I should like you to get a shock.

I don't know one doctor from another.

You soon will.

THERE WAS nothing but a gentleman of scientific eminence in Koti Ra; every sign of perfect breeding and new acquaintance marked his welcome.

I have for some reason, Drak, said he, been appointed president of this commission.

Svillig seemed sometimes to have a power of moving the pupils of his eyes, and did it now.

Koti addressed his two guests, now both, now one, now the other.

I have thought of different places; perhaps you will advise me. It had better I think be on the surface; not so convenient perhaps, but desirable.

Svillig was assenting.

The Dominican[50] convent has a good chapter room; it's frightfully inconvenient, but the speaking room adjoins it. We shall have to rig up a lot of furniture; for there's only one seat and that's all round the wall; and A Ra himself is not allowed to sit in the prior's stall. They have a private descent; but it's always out of order. They might be glad to have it put in repair.

Svillig gave a huge laugh, and it infected the other two.

I thought, he went prosing on, that, if we started the examination at once, it might suggest to our distinguished subject an impression of informality in what we do, and rather screen from his notice the strictly scientific aims of the commission and the oppressive stringency of the commands under which we are acting.

Do you mean . . . Svillig began.

Yes, I have asked two of my colleagues. We could do a bit of examination. You could make notes for the protocol. You are a

physician, aren't you? Afterwards we could all have a pleasant evening.

Drak by temperament could hardly put out his tongue or bare his arm for vaccination. But he started to strip, &, as no one forbad him, he continued. He was introduced naked to the two other doctors.

They measured, examined and pulled him about for an hour, making only their own observations to one another. Then one of them handed him one of his garments, and he dressed slowly, out of suppressed irritation, while they whispered together.

Capital patient, said Koti Ra. Park perceived his good intention of apology and dropped his bad temper.

We were wondering at your athletic and beautifully proportioned body. You have taken good care of yourself. You have only lost four teeth.[51]

The old man took one of his hands, looking at it like a connoisseur, verifying its thinness and firmness and the position of the thumb.

Finger nails on the small side, he remarked. How old are you?

Park determined to be courageous, & answered: 59 (in Latin; as Bapami knows no such numeral). Horrible silence.[52]

Gentlemen, said Koti Ra authoritatively; 59 what?

Solar years. Renewed silence. Koti Ra compressed his lips and asked:

And how many days?

Park calculated and answered:

245. That is, he added, in decimal numeration.

He thought it possible that it was in order to relax tension that Koti Ra asked with polite curiosity:

Decimal numeration? You used that?

Yes.

I wonder what could have been the origin of that. (Svillig was turning over the leaves of a book.) Come; let's have supper; and talk merrily like five old friends.

THE SERVICE was in no way in excess of the meal: bird broth; candied and pickled fruit and vegetables; and the expected goslings, tasting of lemon. There was great variety of biscuits; the wines were sweet and not strong; and there were delicate morsels of cheese looking like wooden matches, taken at any time during the meal. At the end there were fine peaches; and sweets which no one took.

When, as has been said in certain times and places, the cloth was withdrawn, for there was never any sign of any cloth, Koti said:

There are several reasons why we cannot address questions to the most honoured present, & doubtless his wisdom has divined what they are. But nothing prevents his asking questions of us. Talk at table is sacred talk.

So Park began:

There is the surface population of this island. Is it denser in other parts than in this part?

Its density varies exactly with the productivity of the soil.

The soil feeds the whole population?

Yes, and it is the greatest thing done in Ia.

The moors and hills are uninhabited, said another speaker; except by wild creatures.

What?

Different kinds with antlers, including the great kinds.

Wild swine and bears.

Hunting forests?

Yes.

Who use them?

The nobles.

How are they hunted?

Mostly with dogs.

What's the name of that long-legged feline?

Svillig looked pleased and said: N'ti. Have you seen it?

Yes, in captivity.

In captivity?

Yes, & often in pictures. I saw it in a picture the first day I was here, on the eve of the Assumption.

Did you though?

So this surface population consists of nobles, cultivators, & noblemen's servants?

You can express it still more simply; as the noblemen are the cultivators.

Have I exhausted your patience?

Not at all.

The subterranean population.

What about them?

Are they numerous?

They looked at one another in bewilderment, but one said:

Yes.

What's their origin, race? Is it all one?

Oh, you know, that is a terribly hard question.

There are scholars who bother about it.

Who will certainly come pestering you whenever they get the chance.

I approve of that sort of investigation, said Park. But I am only seeking the most general description.

That would be, said Koti Ra, that their race, or races, and origins are not ours.

Conquered, you know, said Svillig sadly. Poor people. They must have had a bitter handling at some time; eh, Koti?

Oh, yes.

Have you seen any? he asked Park.

No. Do they ever come up?

Practically, no.

What prevents them?

No force of law or prohibition. They are obliged to come up, for example, on professional business; sometimes by medical order; for certain journeys . . .

Military exercises, Park put in. At once he experienced the odd feeling of twenty-to or twenty-past of his former life. The four men pretended not to have heard the remark.

I think Drak means, said Koti, voluntary ascents.

Yes, that was my idea.

They are very rare, but not impossible.

Why, in one word, do they stay down?

In one word, said Svillig, because they like it.

Subject to the law of God and the church there is complete freedom for all.

Park fetched his breath, and said:

The natural law, the positive law, the ecclesiastical law . . .

Is the law of the empire.

Before which there can be no inequality.

What is the form of government?

Representative.

Koti Ra saw that the conversation would become interminable, and rose.

He led the way to Drak's rooms, looked round, touched this and that, adjusted a light shade with a host's magnificent servility, and went away in silence.

After a time someone came through the door and passed round the screen; it was Svillig. When he saw how Drak was engaged he himself knelt down and remained so until he had finished.

Koti hopes you will be comfortable. All your personal belongings have been brought to this room, said he, walking towards it.

Drak stared.

Yes, he said, you will be here for some time. Here's the speaking room. If you are called it will be the night secretary. Ah, there he goes.

Ha, said Drak, meaning "attentive".

Svillig could hear that it was an enquiry from a stranger, an embarrassing enquiry, and he perceived that in fact Drak was embarrassed.

I should tell him, he said, to deal with all correspondence till morning.

Drak gave this direction; & Svillig, speaking at the resonant pitch, added: discretion, infinite discretion.

Ng'on n'tha, said the secretary.

Tomorrow, said Svillig, you will be provided with a chancery;[53] we are putting a lawyer in charge of it.

Are you on the commission?

Rather. I am the canonist.[54]

Park became unutterably sad; & felt as though he would never speak again. Two men came in with a loaded tray. When they had gone Svillig poured out a sip of some cordial and Park drank it.

There's a lighter side to everything, said Svillig. I am going to bring you a fellow called Dlar. I cannot say much about him; for he is in a peculiar legal position; he has been under more than one cloud. He is a charming companion, and he knows many things. He is inclined to be saucy. But, whatever he says or does, he is always a black man; and as true as the almanac.

Don't go away.

Drak, remember every human being is unique; & the duration of time is best regarded as one second.

You mean: Cheer up and go to bed?

Something like that.

DLAR walked in alone. He said bluntly, as he handed a folded note: I am never announced or accompanied (he meant by a servant).

Drak made a conventional reply and unfolded the note carefully. In contrast with its intricate creasing it contained only one word, the size of a gnat: Dlar.

We have a friend in common, he said.

Svillig is so much to me that any friend of his is my friend.

Dlar was a beautiful man. He bore a strong resemblance to Svillig, apart from the colour of their hair. This against black skin looked

almost coral. In Dlar it was browner but, if possible, more extraordinary; for his skin was no darker than swarthy. The type, however, was pure enough. He wore a small beard.

He rattled on, to promote acquaintance rapidly. Then, fixing Drak with his great white eyes, he said:

Speak always to me as plainly as you like; otherwise, he added with a smile, I shall have an unfair advantage of you.

It is like that, is it?

No one, said he, is allowed to speak ill of me; the law protects me. I see, he said, that I puzzle you. I am one of the dead. It is a fiction; I am reckoned to be dead.

Drak had it on his tongue to make a whimsical remark, but refrained. Dlar spoke in great earnest:

I have been condemned to death and reprieved.

Drak leaned forward.

I am in consequence regarded in many ways as though I had suffered the penalty I deserved. I am deprived of most of my civil and ecclesiastical rights; and also of many conveniences. I may not hunt, or have men-servants, or publish books. I cannot be a witness or a judge, or bring an action, or exercise a profession. But, on the other hand, no one may touch me either physically or morally: no one may sue me or send me samples or prospectuses, or ask of me alms or other favours; or, as I said, speak ill of me.

There must be some strange psychological consequences.

But I may do as much good as I like; not, however, adopt anyone; and say what I like about myself, with moderation.

Dlar, Drak exclaimed.

I am expected not to boast, however judiciously; &, in general, recommended by my confessor, my relations and friends, indeed by

the whole spirit of our nation, to try to behave in all ways as though I were dead, only awaiting the judgment. Can I do anything for you?

Yes, you can, said Drak with sudden resolution. Hear my confidences, if I can ever get them uttered, and comment on them as ruthlessly as you threaten in fun.

There is no fun in me that I know of. But let me make a start.

Willingly.

Stop that nonsense about being only 60.

How do you mean?

Let others estimate your age, Koti Ra, or me, or anybody.

What good would it do?

Say you are 300.

How can I?

You have been asleep; you have used some horrible drug. Say Yes.

No.

You have been in the empire of Belial.

I cannot understand.

You are a priest.

I am; but how do you know?

We are all recognizable.

So I understand.

You were a missionary.

No, I am a professor.

What of?

Moral.

Have you seen the vicar-general?

On the blue plate, yes.

He is a relative of Svillig. He also has been very good to me.

What relation is he to Svillig?

Let me see. You know what a great grandfather is?

Yes.

Well, he's the great grandfather of Svillig's great grandfather. Dlar laughed cruelly. I told you you have been asleep. You're not awake yet, I must be going.

When are you coming back?

Soon and often.

Koti Ra came in.

Dlar, said he, if you saw anyone who could trot along to the Dominican convent and introduce Drak to the prior, would you do your best?

I was going in that direction.

Good, said the Ra. Perhaps Drak would ask his reverence to expect me about noon.

THE BUILDING with its cloisters covered ten acres.

A vast old convent, the prior said, proudly and apologetically. It has a subterranean church, but we have been cut off from it; & it is now a vicariate.[55] We have a surface church for the office. He led the way to it. It was entirely stone-built, very heavy, severe and vaulted. In style it was clearly linked with the churches of "antiquity" thought Drak, using the word in his mind for the first time. The cloister was older, vast, spacious. By way of ornamentation it was designed so that there were no longitudinal lines but those of the plan, while the vertical lines were as numerous as could be, producing an uncom-

mon effect in the perspective. He dreaded to mention the chapter-house & did not see it. The solid walls of the cloister had been built true enough to be a surface for painting, and had in fact been painted in some past time; but now only vestiges remained.

There were wooden seats in the windows & they sat down.

You have known Dominicans?

Many and well.

Distinguished?

Yes.

Any named Thomas?

Drak thought and answered:

Yes, I think only one.

Not . . .

Drak caught an expression so wistful on the prior's face that it saddened him.

Alas, Father, he said, I was born far too late: but I know well what he looked like.[56]

From portraits? Was he not very stout?

Yes.

Did you ever know a master-general?

Yes; two.

What were their names?

Andreas Fruehwirth and Hyacinth Cormier.[57] Drak saw that the surnames were Chinese to the prior.

Dlar approached and said:

We must not forget the message with which Koti has honoured us. He hopes to be with your reverence about noon.

The prior excused himself and walked away.

That is a most peculiar thing, said Drak, chiefly to himself.

What?

The habit.

Is it changed?

No, said he, except for the bare feet.[58]

This lay-brother, Dlar whispered, wishes to hear you speak your own language. Dlar introduced him to the brother.

He smiled and addressed him slowly and cautiously:

Is it Inglis?

Yes.

You say.

Drak said with the utmost distinctness:

Good morning, brother, I am glad to see you. I hope you are well.

Brother Mark struggled with his vocal organs; and then, with a comical gesture of discouragement, said in Bapama:

Say a few words to me in the classical tongue.

Drak thought and said:

My tongue is the pen of a ready writer.

Calamus velociter scribentis,[59] brother Mark almost shouted with joy, irradiating the countenances of the other two men with his happiness.

IT WAS a day off for Drak. The two friends left their horses & walked in the direction of Koti Ra's house by way of the river. The contrast between the scene and his companion was so poignant that Park had again & again to renew his resolution to abandon himself to his

present experiences without reflection. He would have liked to make a confidence of this; but by no means could he find any way to express his thought. As they walked for the third time through the water of a shallow, well-built ford he said:

No bridges?

No, said Dlar, we only use them on the fast traffic roads. I sometimes think, said he, that it is one example of a sort of harmless hostility we have towards the subject race. You never see them walk in water.

Then how do they get about?

They don't. And that is not all they dislike; in the same way they hate the upper air; and they cannot endure the natural light of the sun.

Whatever took them underground? Were they forced?

In a way it must have been that; and yet not entirely. Let's get some food here.

They had entered a paved yard as though to cross it, when Dlar made this suggestion.

Who's the proprietor?

I forget his name if ever I knew it. He's a fanciful kind of chap, often underground. Mixed blood; artist; there's something odd about him.

The host was black enough and a gentleman, but he could not conceal his uneasiness quite.

The greetings & hospitality were chiefly in facial expression and disconnected syllables.

They were taking the simple meal, an egg thing, something like an omelette, some dried figs and raisins; beer, and the invariable cheese.

The children, said Dlar. The man said:

The elder is not quite well: and the little one is shy.

I told you, said Dlar, that there is something wanting. No black man behaves like that. You know what the truth is: fear of our beards.

Drak made no answer and Dlar seemed to relent.

I do many bad things, said he; I must make it up to him. Just help. Put on all your villainy and hypocrisy.

Drak was jolted by this, but decided to laugh too.

You're not dead, you know; though he thinks you are.

There is a sad want, said he, when the man reappeared, in this delicious repast; that our host is not seated with us in conversation. I, Dlar, have the honour to present Drak, Koti Ra's guest; a stranger among us.

Ini'in, said the man, greets you, sir, and desires to welcome you often.

Drak, said Dlar, wishes to know why, he means the profound reason, why underground folk are where they are. If you cannot satisfy him, nobody can.

May I fetch a cool drink?

When Ini'in came with the wine, he had the host look and manner which beautifies all men. He stood still. Dlar with his natural clairvoyance said:

What if we took the wine out of doors?

They passed into an enclosed quadrangle as beautiful as a bowling green, though the elements of its beauty were simpler: a sheet of peerless grass, with an enormous stone astronomical object in the middle; the grey wall, a triumph of proportion. A table was ready set under an awning; on it were three cups, a bowl of peaches, an empty bowl for refuse and an earthenware cradle for the wine-bottle. The sky, blue and white.

I admire that jar, said Drak.

Well he might. For it was spherical with a short small neck.

It has a name, said Ini'in; showing, in barbaric incision, made when the clay was soft, the word: Esperu.

When the wine had been tasted, Ini'in said:

It is certain that the underground tunnels and caverns are in part more ancient than our coming to this island.[60] They are excavated & strengthened with consummate engineering art; & are still the wonder of our greatest men. It is even supposed by some that these works were carried out by people of whom no other record has remained.

People almost mythical.

Yes. For if, it is said, you place them anywhere in history as we teach it, you are faced by an intolerable paradox: mechanical construction & genius we cannot overpraise, with moral degeneration the most complete. The palace of Vulcan inhabited by rats; Vulcan[61] & the rats contemporary, if not identical.

Well?

Why, to make a short ending of a long story, when their troubles came upon them, they took refuge underground and are there to this day.

Contented? asked Drak.

I think so, said Dlar and Ini'in at once.

The two children came and had a look at the visitors.

PERHAPS it was the wine speaking; or more likely human and cultured intercourse had stropped his wits. Drak spoke, or thought he spoke, with intelligence, as they walked home to Kota, and Dlar was laughingly benevolent.

Dlar, said he; is it right to ask questions; first, in general; specially, of dead men; most specially, here and now?

Yes, yesser, yessest.[62]

I think I see what protects the questioned.

What is it?

The crystalline truth of the answers he might return.

Dlar stood off, faced him; &, staring like a trunkless head, said: Drak, your skin is white, more's the pity; but you are black inside. Ask questions.

Are you on the commission?

How could I be either judge or witness?

No, I remember. Have you any instructions from Koti Ra?

Yes, though not explicit.

Thank you.

Svillig spoke plainly enough, Dlar went on; you know, he & I are very great friends; we are related—though of course everybody is, unless they are tainted. We were educated together; and besides, he added, meekly and with emotion, I am his dead man; for he was my advocate at the trial.

Trial?

Yes.

You were tried?

You should think little of your own annoyances, great and grave as I know they are.

I see your drift.

Yes, I am coming to it. Svillig said to me: Kentigern Park (Dlar pronounced the name, in spite of its awkward consonants, without

fault) is a friend of mine & I wish you to shield him with the whole of your ability. That was all, and that was enough.

You know English? said Drak in English.

I do, he answered, in the same language; but, he added in Bapama, never mind that now.

And Koti, he continued, means that I should go about with you, answer your questions and bring you to the sessions in as good a temper as possible. You are an irritable devil.[63]

I know; but consider my age.

I do, said he, with a meaning grimace.

Park was swept off his balance by the alertness of this man's mind, and the swiftness and accuracy of his judgment.

Now that you have heard the confession of a conspirator, said he, listen to the advice of a friend; everywhere in all this ghastly enquiry coming on, always say what you think. Afterwards too, even to the highest. What you think is generally known beforehand.

I expect my thoughts are engineered for me.

Isn't that so always in intelligent conversation?

In debates, no doubt.

And nothing so delights a cultivated mind as to be surprised.

Hazardous procedure, Drak murmured.

It eliminates fools. It eliminated me.

Will those sessions be public?

Most of them.

Will pale people be present?

Certain. For millions of them are scientific people. But watch old Koti. Only observe the seat of the commission. The convent has no

vehicular access. It is enclosed; no woman but an archprincess can enter, and there is no archprincess; for A Ra is in sacred orders. The weather will be wet; there might even be snow.

How are pale men treated?

The question answers itself each time. Some of them are highly intelligent, some not. But, in general, remember that as a guest of the oligarchs you rank with them; & know as little of the others as you did of the barbarians of your own time.

What's the order now? he asked; for they were back.

Hulloa, exclaimed Dlar, there's a sentry. Excuse me. The order? Let me see. A big bath; vespers; assembly; supper; pleasant evening.

Drak's servant met him.

David desires to wait upon you. Will you see him before the bath or after?

After.

David was the man in charge of Drak's temporary office. When he came in, he uttered the compliments in one long hyphened sentence and continued, without pausing:

The correspondence has been heavy. It will soon be registered. We are getting two more clerks. I have here an analysis. Shall I read it?

Do.

There is nothing at all involving risks; although there are numerous notices and citations. Drak looked up.

Nothing, nothing at all, he said, and went on.

There have been 600 calls, all dealt with; nothing significant; except:

One from the archprince (herewith the message & the answer returned); fifteen from the Mgr Villa (all abandoned); one from Cuan Niger, head gamekeeper to His Highness Prince Edni: I have found

geranium pratense; we killed three salmon. There are 155 letters from learned societies; sixteen from newspapers; four from theatres; a selection acknowledged. About a thousand uneducated letters. Publications not opened. Instructions?

Docket the society & newspaper letters, & submit them.

David had foreseen this request: & handed the packet at once.

Pick me out a few of the miscellaneous letters; and six newspapers, illustrated. The lawyer withdrew.

EDNI RA was a stately old man. His dress spoke itself old-fashioned. He had a military bearing, it there was such a thing; and, if so, not without cause. Wapami thought and speech dwelt little on genealogy; but no one could hear the name & not remember the general whose genius was a landmark in history.

To what was still reckoned one of the greatest names was linked the finest property in the island. It corresponded roughly with Park's former summer playground, Cotswold. It contained therefore all the sources of the Esi, and the Ra had peculiar rights over the river until it reached the municipal boundaries of Ito. He raised important crops; and the Edni herds were celebrated though not numerous. The pride of the man, qualified by his simplicity, was, for one reason and another, admired. "As black as Edni" meant the perfection of breeding.

Edni the estate was, in Drak's eyes, the summit of cultivated beauty. There was not an eye-sorrow upon it. The Camp, as the residence was called, was a string of palaces stretching for five miles along the edge of the bluff overlooking the valley of Kottatil. Forming roots, as it were, to this terrific dwelling, was an escarpment such, that the view of the Camp from below was as astonishing in another way as the prospect from its terraces and countless balconies.

A touch may be added to this summary description. There was a very great yard where Drak easily located the village of Birdlip; and from it shot eastward a stretched-string road such as the Romans would have envied. It continued so until it joined the circular road upon which Park had been hit. Some former Edni had not only brought this route to the straight, but with great labour had levelled it. It was princely causeway, flagged all the way; and very carefully kept, as some knew; but so skilfully as to appear almost neglected.

A drive with Edni Ra from the Camp to his villa was marked by Edni simplicity. A couple of scouts rode half a mile ahead, & were of course always in view. The driver was motionless: for the horses knew what they had to do & there was nothing to prevent them from doing it. The group of overseers rode far enough behind for their clattering not to be heard. And the old prince drank in the vision all the way.

The houses of the villa stood on an eminence which seemed artificial.

One day Edni Ra remarked upon it to Drak.

There is an ancient town under this.

Yes, he said.

You say Yes, said the Prince. Do you know its name?

Cirencester or simply Ciren.[64]

Say it again. Drak did so.

I wonder, he said slowly. I have heard the ploughmen call the villa Sirri.

IN the big hall of Koti Ra's house Edni Ra came towards Drak the moment he entered.

Our visitor, Prince, said Koti Ra.

What's his name?

We call him Drak; but he calls himself by other names. Edni Ra looked still attentive and expectant; so Drak said:

Mungo Park.

Is that just a name?

Yes.

Has it any meaning beside being your name?

Mungo was the name of a saint.[65]

I never heard of that saint.

And Park as it happens means in my language an enclosed property.

Does it though? Changing the subject he said:

We are acquainted in a way, aren't we?

Drak smiled.

I say, Koti: I want to be a witness in the enquiry or whatever it is.

Koti Ra beamed inexpressible satisfaction. Drak noticed stenographers hard at work.

You know, said Edni, on the very day of that most unfortunate assault by my gamekeeper I had posted a guard of fifty men all along the north boundary of Edni, with orders to take a description of every stranger. I was abroad when I got the unhappy news. I started home at once; and I communicated with that incomparable Svillig. Ah, there he is. Villa, come and listen.

Through that competent channel—that was you, Villa—we made shift somehow.

Drak was an admirable guest, said Villa; weren't you, Drak?

I am very grateful to His Highness.

You were surprised by the shot?

I was surprised before that.

And so on, at length and in breadth.

When Koti said suddenly: Prince, will you sup? & the dozen or so of men moved in one direction, it flashed upon Drak that another informal session of the commission had taken place; that he had been turned inside out, and every fibre of his mind explored.

He sighed and wondered where Dlar was. The thought of the dead man evoked his image and expression of valiant cynicism. Drak stiffened his spirit, and flung himself into enjoyment of the repast and the wild banter of conversation under the rose.

IT MAY or may not have been the next day—it might have been even a month later.

The days, wonderfully varied in persons & particulars, were standardized by an irreducible fact: Drak was a prisoner and a tormented prisoner. He thought often of Herman Melville's Three Years in the Marquesas Islands; and another, a Russian book : Nine Years Captivity . . .[66]

He lived holding on to his courage, and sometimes to his reason, with a death-grip. But the screw was tightening, the rack lengthening.

Yet, so he consoled himself, life was never such life before. He had the support of religion. He heard mass daily at home; for Kota, like all great mansions, had a private cupola similar to that to which he had ridden on the 15th August. He made his confession regularly and said his breviary. He rode daily; he could be as abstemious as he chose; his bath was restorative; and, strange to say, he never dreamed at all.

He paid one free visit, by Koti's express permission, to the prior of the Carthusians.[67]

Well, on this day, Dlar walked in with his sunny impudence.

Though you are sixty you need not look like Methusala.[68]

It is a horrible sight, I suppose; what do I do?

Do? Why, get it cut.

He saw Dlar intended elaborate teasing and resolved to outwit him. He called his servant; and, when the man came in, he could not remember the word for a hairdresser. Dlar with downcast eyes looked his most mischievous. Drak said to his servant the word "coiffeur". The servant went away as though he had understood.

Both men laughed.

Drak told Dlar the story of the man with the little head and the big beard. Dlar liked it, and repeated parts of it, correcting the diction.

You told that story better than usual.

Drak looked up as someone came in. It was David. He brought a copy of the newspaper Eon and pointed to a paragraph.

THE EDNI SHOOTING CASE

> This morning Cuan Niger, gamekeeper, appeared in magistrate's court no. 25 and answered the interrogatories. The man was ordered by the magistrates not to leave the island without their permission.

Do you make any comment? asked Drak.

I will write a few notes, said David.

Drak handed the paper to Dlar, who looked at it and returned it in silence. Dlar read his friend's thoughts and said:

Never defend the accused, unless you are employed to do so. And let David do his own work. Have you seen this?

Drak gulped down his misery as he had often to do; and took the small volume Dlar held in his hand.

From old habit he looked into it for faults; yet, though his eye caught

them everywhere, he was charmed by the type & the disposition of everything.

Do you detect any errors? Dlar asked.

It cost him one of his greatest efforts; but so anxious was he for Dlar's good opinion, that he said:

Yes.

You will point them out to me when you have time?

Willingly.

It's not published, you know; I am not allowed to publish books.

It was a collection of short texts in English, mostly inscriptions; but many, by what unheard-of miracle, must have survived through manuscript or printed documents.

Drak was sunk in such a prodigious dream that, for the first time, he paid no heed to what Dlar was saying. He recovered with a wrench, and asked:

May I have it for a day?

THE PUBLIC sessions of the commission had begun. Fatiguing as it was for Drak, he recognized Koti's kind wisdom in arranging the informal meetings. For, as witness after witness was examined, a sworn report was passed round in print to the members and formed the basis of the questions asked and statements made.

Whenever the president looked towards Drak he rose & made a statement, which usually had been carefully prepared with Dlar's assistance. David was always present; and often diverted the session by his influence, though his voice was never heard.

Perhaps the commission had in reality fulfilled its mandate, when there was a sensation. Drak had come to have almost one mind with his dead friend; for he was detached & cynical as he had never

expected to be. He guessed, correctly, that the "sensation" had been, if not exactly pre-arranged, foreseen. The Registrar announced in toneless words that the late Dom Egid Reni of Reni, S.T.M., D.C.L.... This was Dlar. He never reached the end of the sentence; for five commissioners spoke at once, and were presently joined by others. Disorder became such that, after a few minutes, Koti rose; and the grooms ran for the horses.

Next day the chapter room was crammed; the cloister was dense with reporters. The inspector of police sat in the speaking room talking the whole time to his subordinates.

Koti said the prayer Actiones nostras.[69] It was just silence before the storm, which soon broke and rose and raged. Before long it was understood that Koti had said: The session is private. He remained standing; and this, with the arrival of twenty five policemen, brought quiet and then dead silence. Koti ordered the stenographers and David to withdraw; and sent away his own clerks.

Be seated, gentlemen, he said. The date and place of the next session will be made known. There will be no record kept of what I am about to say. I suggest that we complete the labour of the present session walking about; & that will afford anyone who desires it the opportunity of apologizing to Dom Monaco Parek!

What urbanity there was. What a thunderstorm rolled from the blue sky. At last the prior craved permission to enter. After a word with Koti he announced:

As I have obtained from his lordship the bishop dispensation from silence & abstinence, I am able to offer you, gentlemen, some simple hospitality and do so.

The hope was whispered about that Dlar might be present at the collation; and, in the refectory, there he was. Each sat where he chose. In every direction two men were looking persuasively for Drak to sit between them. Dlar said to him:

I will tell you about it; such fun.

Svillig said to him:

There will be a banquet this evening.

Where?

It is not known; it will be left to ballot.

SVILLIG & Dlar were in Drak's room, talking with excitement which they took not the slightest trouble to conceal. David came in, & joined in the conversation almost as an equal. He said:

The correspondence is horrible.

All laughed.

Take a week to it, said Drak.

Make it six months, said David. There are however a few things.

Any risks?

None that I know of. And (in a whisper) I won't bother you about the gamekeeper.

All right. Anything else?

The archprince is confined to bed.

You returned the correct answer of course?

One of the dreadful pauses followed which made Drak's heart stop. The two Wapame saw that David was the more to be pitied; for it was he, a trained lawyer, who had brought out Drak's unfortunate words.

David, said Dlar, you're no pea. You're a melon.

He seemed grateful for this gross familiarity.

Away with your business, continued the dead man; get on to the rumours.

There's one more item of business, said the lawyer lamentably.

Shall I deal with it? asked Svillig. He took the paper, & read: Her Highness the Princess I commands the attendance of Koti Ra's visitor this day week; simple dress.

Answer, continued Svillig without hiatus, The subject bows to the earth.

Drak, in his anguish, remembered what his physician had once said to him: When a man is going to die he does it.

He jettisoned all his fears and miseries, and said to Svillig:

Many thanks.

Koti came in. He beamed expressively on Drak, who tried to express in a look all his relief and gratitude, and was understood by the old physician prince.

Svillig and Dlar remained looking at Koti Ra in silence; for they knew he had something to impart.

We had better tell Drak the news. You are enfranchised and ennobled.

Drak wished he were either awake or dead.

When all I want, he reflected bitterly, is a pair of tacketty boots, forty pounds a quarter and a miserable life.[70]

The three men interpreted his expression with great accuracy.

You have yet to experience freedom of movement in Ia; it is a good land, said Dlar.

In a sense the whole island will be your own and you will have a particular property, Svillig added. Have you heard (to Koti) where it is to be?

It's the old place called Trouble Farm; but the name is to be changed. Mention it, Dlar, for it was your suggestion; & you can pronounce the word.

Park, said he.

Damn the grandeur, muttered Park of Park to himself.

Trouble Farm, said Svillig, belonged to Edni.

That's right, said Koti Ra. The archprince has allowed him to relinquish it.

What handsome thoughts black men have, said Park.

Koti thought the tension was enough and became boyish.

Come now, guess where the banquet is to be?

Here, said Park.

Right. And who's to be here? besides ourselves? (glancing at Dlar).

Well, the members of the commission.

Of course. And old Dr Eza; you liked him.

And Edni Ra?

Yes. The archprince is ill; but he is sending his nephew, Toni Ra; he's quite young. And eleven more.*

Speeches? asked Drak.

They are printed and handed round. If any are spoken, they are limited to about 20 words.

Svillig caught Drak's eye and said:

After Toni Ra you will rise; and, looking towards him, say: I remember all your Highness's kinsmen and all the faithful departed. Not one word more. All, except Dlar, will stand for a moment. You sit when all sit.

When he came out of his bath Park found a complete set of new garments laid out for him. They were striped like his old blue and

*Meaning, of course, 8.

red (which was Prince Edni's livery); but of colours which really charmed his taste; ash-colour & a very dim rose. His shoes were of the latter colour, as also the foot bandages. His girdle and collar were of cloth of silver. No ornament was hung on the hook of the latter.

In the drawing room he was presented to Toni Ra; who looked like an undergraduate, as he was. He wore the royal livery, white; and he had a sky-blue cap.

His friends had so fully primed Park that the banquet came near to unqualified joy. But as the misery hung over him until it was burst, Koti said to him, with an unbelievable want of formality:

Get it over, eh?

Park nodded.

Koti rose and sat again.

Prince Toni rose and said:

Sir, the sovereign, my august uncle, regrets his absence. He commands me to offer, & you to accept, a token of his princely benevolence.

Park waited until an equerry brought him the object, glanced at it, and, rising, pronounced the appointed words. All happened as predicted. When the medal came back to him, for it journeyed round the company for admiration, he saw that it represented a sailing ship, white on a blue and green ground, and that the reverse consisted of the words, in sumptuous lettering, DORMIO, SED COR MEUM VIGILAT.[71] Koti hung the medal on the empty hook; & everybody smiled. The evening was most lively; and the young prince stayed so late that when he left the party broke up.

Svillig left reluctantly at the end of the third watch. Tedious as it was, he had to journey down to Kottatil, where he expected to find business fiercely accumulated, as he had been so much absent.

Dlar, who took little notice of day or night, or where he lodged,

continued the talk which had principally occupied the three friends: on setting up the new establishment, and the future management of the little estate. The dead man was willing to talk to exhaustion, for the sake of the parentheses which every now and then he would contrive to include in the conversation; as for example:

Yes, I approve of that, stick to the tradition.

Nothing changed; no, not the colour of a cartwheel.

Quite so; formation of a library.

Edni will be most loyal; he will keep out of the way. He will seem not to interfere with you.

Yes, call on Edni often; once a week. Always go when he asks you. Always show yourself on the blue plate whenever you have been speaking to him.

These & innumerable counsels were carried out as Park's life drifted gradually to Park and at last came to rest there. He learned the ways of proprietorship and hospitality. He used a convenient cupola for his daily mass. It looked into the Carthusian church. Occasionally he went there for the night office. He fitted up an oratory with Prince Edni's advice and assistance. He used his library for a division of every day, & began systematic study of the Wapami classics. Usually in the company of the Prince, he ranged far and wide over Edni; & sometimes, though rarely, beyond it.

IT WOULD not be necessary, even if it were possible, to produce a very lengthy summary of the documents bearing upon his legal status which, with no great delay, were delivered to Park. The barest will, and must, suffice.

There were two written documents, which might be called the Patent and the Title; two printed volumes named respectively the Tenure of Property, the Oath of the Nobility. Add to these, before Park could

hope to understand them, comments of the faithful and magnanimous Dlar.

The friend spent much of his time at Park; & Drak was often a guest at Reni, the delicious villa in a hollow in the chalk towards the high down. Many hours of the day and night were spent over the matter.

It became a black man, said Dlar, to understand his position as fully and clearly as he could; and, he added, in his character of a friend, he might be awkwardly caught if he did not.

Very roughly, then:

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen. Considering the divine clemency, inscrutable, has bestowed upon me, A, hereditary prince and vassal of his lordship the Emperor, who for the present purpose shall be no further described, the charge of a gentleman hitherto unknown to me personally, I have, in council, considered it opportune to appoint him a name, Kentigern Park, together with rank and property suited to his origin, learning, ability and merit, which last I believe to be exceptional.

Before all, I direct him to call to mind at least once a day the end for which he was created, and to submit in all matters which concern his salvation, and the conduct of this present life, to his ecclesiastical lord, the archbishop of Kottatil, and to continue in constant and sincere communication with His Grace at least indirectly.

The property now called Park was to be his unto long years, meaning until he reached the age of 400, when a special edict would permit, that is, force, him to retire to Kano. He was for ever exempt from burdens fiscal, parliamentary and administrative. No one may cite him, sue him, ask favours of him or speak ill of him.

And let no one, however exalted, presume to surmise that these exemptions are in any way connected with any fault in my beloved subject for which he could be answerable to the law. And if anyone, in malice, or jest, or even in the good faith of ignorance, should

express such a surmise, he is to be sharply corrected by the nearest justice.

Park had to administer his property well, disposing of his produce as directed at great length.

Though for health and recreation he might take "feather and scale"[72] under existing restrictions, he was to abstain from any exhibition of horsemanship and from great hunting.

He had access to every library not the property of one person, and to all museums, but not laboratories, at all times except from matins of Holy Thursday to the second vespers of Easter Day.[73]

He had complete liberty throughout the island, though access to the forests might be denied him; & beyond it in the provinces specified, and over all the great ocean & the long sea; always keeping out of sight of Kano the continent, unless unavoidably driven thither. Nor was he to possess any map or plan of the continent, its rivers, lakes, ports, harbours, docks, canals, cities, railways, mines, and so on exhaustively.

No one will provoke you to mention Kano or think of it; and you should let good example guide you.

With respect, why is the permission to journey not general?

Because many places, islands especially, but great continental tracts as well, are in practice inaccessible.

For example?

Well, the great peninsula is all forest, timber, mines, some quarries, hunting. The cornland is only corn and industrial fishing. There are very great experimental areas. And again many provinces are governed with difficulty; and may be, for all I know, under martial law, or something like that.

Drak was going to say something.

Stay, said Dlar. I will answer you what is in your mind. It is as well for you to know what no one ever mentions. There is the military establishment for the empire. I have no military rank; neither have you.

I understand and thank you. What about the islands?

Why can't you guess? Don't you remember how you scored off old Eza during the commission?

No.

He said you were born in Hindi.

Yes, now I remember.

He pointed to a little island in the southern ocean, and asked how you escaped from it.

So he did.

You told him you had webbed feet and walked home.

Shockingly rude. But I was tormented and everybody was laughing.

Well, we send to the islands people who are wanting other things besides webbed feet. The mad, for example, and people who cannot take care of themselves or their property; those who are a danger to others, from a variety of causes; those who cannot be corrected of practices we hate, like making money out of sport.

Beside out-and-out criminals.

Yes, many are penal places. All those classes are far more numerous than you think. For remember it is a big empire, & its populations are in many places dense, the races are heterogeneous, & in all stages of racial decrepitude. Ia is misleading; its people are extraordinarily docile to good government. They have ability of all kinds, mechanical, scientific, artistic, and are in consequence very well off.

You interest me.

We must find you opportunities of verifying these facts. Our province is more like a happy family than experience would lead one to expect. In that view it is a pattern to the empire.

And in others?

In others too, though less important, if not negligible, it has a lead. Its industrial arts are in some sections unrivalled, printing for example and the related arts, illustration, engraving, bookbinding, calligraphy. Its pottery is said to be unsurpassed, even by antiquity. I daresay you judge well of the common things we use daily. Smith's work again. There are sixty gates* of which I say no more; with their sixty names, which I am not privileged to repeat; and they came out of the forges of Ia, the island where I was born, my Ia.

While he is not absolutely forbidden to pass beyond the frontiers of the empire and enter the regions at present occupied by infidels, he is cautioned, even though he should take such a journey in order to carry the faith of Christ to those who are without knowledge, or being inspired with the thirst of martyrdom, not to be unprovided with all permissions, the usefulness of which is self-evident; but he is forbidden to trade in those regions under any pretext or disguise; and he is recommended to consult with men of known ability, for the better understanding of this prohibition.

They will tell you, Dlar volunteered, if they are honest, that the blackest man, being au fond[74] the white rat that he is, is liable to go sneaking about, dressed up in pagan clothes, riding on pagan camels, violating pagans' graves, digging up pagan ruins, not for the love...

He looked at Drak and saw how round his eyes had become.

Don't mind, Drak, there will be some consolation for you when I have finished; but you must learn.

*Meaing 42

Go on with what you were saying.

. . . not for the love of tablets and sculptures, of vessels and paintings; not for the love of history and antiquities; not for the love of knowledge, but for the love of loot & vainglory.

Nevertheless. . .

(as you rightly say) if a man is so primed with knowledge, so chastened by meditation, that he expects to find no more in any place he may visit than what he takes with him, then he may to into deserts, look reverently upon what is to be seen, and having seen it come back on foot and empty-handed, to continue his classes or his meditations.

The region of the infidels is the same place as the empire of Belial I have heard you and the others mention?

It is usually called by that name.

Where is it?

You should infer that, with your good knowledge of geography, from what we have often said together. It consists of not quite half of the land and water surface of the globe.

It lies round the . . .

the what?

We called it, said Drak, the "Pacific Ocean".

The name & the fact must have struck the mind of Dlar with sudden and exhilarating force.

He almost shone with pleasure and scorn. "Pacific Ocean", he repeated in every tone, laughing loudly and bitterly.

Called also the swamp of iniquity, the marsh of ineptitude, the lake of fire, Pacific Ocean, Pacific Ocean.

You like the name?

Drak, he said softly, may I just speak to Oli of Han'na? But you don't know him?

No.

May I, while I am speaking to him, ask him in your name to come to Park?

Do so, indeed.

You will like him.

Is he dead?

Not yet, said Dlar; and went into the speaking room.

He came back.

Delighted!

Good, said Drak.

Will you come and speak to him?

With pleasure.

The usual palaver.

Speak English, Dlar suddenly interjected in a tone of banter.

There came a slow quavering sentence:

I am much honoured by your invitation to Park.

Most welcome, said Dlar.

Dlar manipulated the blue plate. Drak, as the image appeared, uncovered and smiled; and the image disappeared.

The dead men walked back in silence to the study, staring at one another like conspirators. Dlar spoke:

Services to the state, unrewardable services.

Oli was a white; of a most repulsive type.

ONE MORNING of mid-December there was a call from Svillig.

There's something. Have you time to slip down?

Yes.

You are sure? No engagements?

None.

Anything tomorrow?

Nothing; all is clear.

Then ride to Bisli Public Descent. Train to Kottatil 65 Lower. I will send a clerk to meet you.

Right. I start now.

When the lift came to rest it was evident that the attendant had sent some signal, for the stationmaster was there, obsequious.

Park had never been underground; he struggled as with a nightmare.

Let things happen, he upbraided himself; you cannot control them; no reflections; do what you are doing.

Though he had only fifty yards to go, and the coach was waiting, he felt relief when at last he reached it through a whirl of impressions.

All as desired? asked the stationmaster.

All.

Any message to Monsignor Villa?

Park of Park has started.

In good health?

In good health.

He opened his novel, and went on reading it. When the train stopped he showed not the slightest interest in anything. Nightmare faces appeared by hundreds. At one of the stops the door slid and someone said:

Kottatil 65 Lower. N'gon n'tha.

He looked at the man & thought it was still the Bisli stationmaster; but the innumerable other people looked so too. A rough way was thrust for him through the crowd; & presently he was met by the ecclesiastic. He was black, thank God. But he would have walked through fire to Svillig.

Is all well? asked his friend.

Perfectly.

You look tired.

Well, I am that; but never mind.

I mustn't delay to show you the thing, as you have come down so amiably.

He produced a full-size careful drawing of a carved inscription.

Do you see what it is?

Clearly. It is a bit confused: but I have no doubt it can be put straight. It's a smashed epitaph.

It is that, isn't it? he said proudly.

Undoubtedly.

Now, what do you say? Could you bear to come along to Villa Gracil? It's a long way, but there's a very fast train running for some hunting people. I have managed to secure a coach; & if we have a companion or two you are sure to like them.

Park showed elation. Svillig added:

We shall get some food on the way; and we go through Sul.

As they walked down the steps to the vestibule of the vicariate, Svillig showed dismay.

We shall need assistance, he groaned, to force a way through that crowd.

He looked over his shoulder and gave an order to someone:

Four porters, armed. And they waited, having no choice.

Park's thoughts were he knew not what. There was the vision before his mind of a struggle such as no dream had ever shown. But his acquired black blood stood to attention, calm.

The dreadful type of the crowd, showing no variety that he could distinguish, fascinated him. The eyes were large and prominent, looking to right and left, rabbit style; noses were hooked and thin, teeth prominent. Rodents, thought he; and all know what a relief it is to find a definition.

Four men appeared, looking like gladiators with their metal helmets, body armour & greaves.[75] Their arms were bare. At their belts appeared the ribbed hilts of their weapons.

The crowd gradually opened a passage for a few yards; then it closed again, helpless through its own pressure.

The men shoved with energy; at last to no purpose. The whole group were presently enclosed, in apparent danger of being crushed. When the men had breathed:

Once more, said Svillig; and at it they went.

Ola, ola, shouted Svillig; may a gentleman not walk to his coach, though accompanied by a churchman of rank? Are black men so treated? Are dead men so treated? (For Park at the time was dead.)

This was the climax. With piteous horror all who heard tried to be somewhere else and shoved with the guards.

You'll have to draw, said Svillig. Out flashed the weapons. To Park's unutterable relief they were "only" whips. There were screams, the crowd climbed upon one another in terror.

There then began shouting, lashing, screaming somewhere near at hand; and the crowd broke.

Svillig smiled; but he was as near white as his colour permitted.

I'll give him something, he muttered. Park was grieved to hear for the first time threats uttered by that gentle voice.

There was no missing the way to the coach; a corridor of people led to it. The two entered it & stood there. Svillig had just control of himself, but looked savage. The stationmaster appeared. Where were the railway people? Svillig soliloquized; where were the police? What clerk took my instructions? Not a seat; not a fan; not an attendant; not a cup of water.

Take a message for the minister. Take a message for the chief of police.

Reverence, he pleaded; a slave, a slave. Dead nobleman, an orphan slave.

Behave, said Svillig. Where are the cases?

At Sul, said he; & at Sul there is a coach with dining room and lounge; and doubled attendants. The station and the bathing pool will be cleared.

Excellent arrangements, said Svillig.

The stationmaster disappeared like an image from the blue plate.

What a way to say the itinerarium,[76] said Svillig; and smiled. Hold on till Sul, he added; it's only five minutes.

And here they were at Sul.

Come on, it's glorious; the water is boiling hot. How long? he asked.

Twenty minutes; no hurry.

Stick everything in.

Everything. N'gon n'tha.

Little by little, what with the hot plunge, the lick of fragrant oil, applied and wiped off by accomplished men, clothes newly ironed, the odd and happy meal in the train, the harmony of all things was

restored; whether it was the hunting passengers coming into the lounge from idleness & curiosity, or crowds of inquisitive rodents, staring, everything seemed as it should be. At the destination, there were the necessary horses and a cart for the luggage. The farm-manager, who drove the cart himself in a simplified country way, brought with him a little black spaniel, named Sufi, which almost wept with joy at the sight of Svillig; though she knew well whom to expect, for the farm-manager had told her fifty times.

They started for Villa, trotting along the surface of the road in total darkness.

We are passing on the right the Cathedral of Eli.[77] It has parts of a very old building, they say fabulously old. You may know something about it.

Drak thought he was fainting.

Did she stumble? asked Svillig.

No, said Drak.

Here we have to take to the grass; I'll ride in front, whistling.

He rode on, singing Decora lux.[78]

But the horses knew the way and they arrived at a gallop, clattering into the yard.

Svillig was a happy host. He rarely saw his old, lovely home; a very great farm-house. The massive interior showed huge beam members of the building; and the floors were enormous flags. A mighty fire blazed. Much of the furniture was part of the structure: the big table; the settles built to the walls. There were heavy screens, painted with Ia work.

The gentle little secretary, a church student, & a careful archaeologist, was sent for. He appeared as only two white eyes in the dark doorway, for he wore a monastic dress, perhaps Benedictine.[79]

Shall I bring the plate? he asked almost at once; for he knew what had brought Monsignor Villa to his home.

Two men carried it in on a board and placed it on the table.

It's a fine thing, said Drak, in general appreciation of the inscription with its handsome lettering and pedantic style.

The drawing was brought.

Drak asked permission to touch the tablet; and moved here & there a fragment, for the plate was smashed badly. As he made these changes, the young man marked his drawing. There were gaps, two or three only, and not large.

The restoration will not be difficult as to the epitaph, said Drak.

You can read it all?

Practically, yes; I should want to think over that patch, said he, touching the biggest gap.

Just roughly, then, give us the translation.

When he finished, Svillig said:

That's not all.

No, not quite.

He waited for Drak to finish and Drak would not. They became obstinate.

That's all, Svillig said, sternly; & the young man left quickly and silently.

Silence.

Svillig, said Drak.

Silence. Park decided to give way.

Nothing remains but the date.

Exactly, said Svillig.

I have heard you speak so bitterly; and, if I may say so, so unreasonably . . .

You are welcome to say so.

when the subject has been chronology, that I thought I would run no further risk of provoking you.

I have not expressed to you all the bitterness I feel.

I confess I am hopelessly puzzled.

We are friends.

I am happy to say.

Well, what is the wretched date?

A.D. one, seven, seven, seven.

A.D. really means anno salutis nostrae?[80]

Yes. It is decimal numeration.

Even so, the very figures are a solecism.

Don't be angry.

What doctor of the church was living at that date?

I think St. Alphonsus was already born.[81]

At the risk of repetition, I must say to you that, upon the authority of historians the most competent, we require at this date at least ten thousand years, decimal numeration, to accommodate ascertained historical tables. Centuries of labour, flawless learning; incontrovertible conclusions.

I am not angry; but I decline to say one word more on the subject of chronology.

Then what are you?

Drak made no answer.

Excuse me, Drak, I must leave you for a few minutes.

When Svillig returned he made a sort of venia,[82] and said:

I ask pardon; and if you remember the place & circumstances, you will grant it more easily.

Most completely, said Drak.

Come along and see things.

Owner's pride and guest's curiosity were about equal. The difficulties of inspecting in the dark, except for carried lights, were nothing to the friends. Their shadows reared, leaned & drooped in a barn like a church. Sheds, pens, stores, buttery, larders, the bath, were visited.

The sanctuary lamp burned in the oratory, crypt-like & white-washed, with a three-quarter-circular apse and small round windows. There was a chaplain resident at Villa. Representations of angels covered the walls of the apse; and figures of Benedictine saints were on the lateral walls.

There were three rooms of greater height, one a library, and in each were many portraits produced upon the wooden walls, panels of inlay and painting.

Supper was in the old kitchen, where the fire burned. There were four: for the chaplain came and the student. There was a big, shallow pie made of pigeons and onion; & delicious beer. Drak thought he had supped; but the cook in person brought with evident pride a dish of two split pheasants and cabbage done in stock.

In the country, said Svillig, we are supposed to have country appetites; a good supposition.

The rest was tropical fruits and sweetish wine.

The other two, while at table, received from Svillig (& they addressed him by that name for the time being) enough attention to make up for all possible omissions in the past, plus a considerable deposit for the future. They early got permission to retire; and the two friends settled down to a night of conversation.

A very long time passed over matters suggested by what Drak had seen going round the house; much to tell and hear of ancestors, builders, subjects of the portraits, one a martyr.

The builder of the oratory was a Benedictine as you see by the decorations: Benedi, Scolasti, Mol, Truta, Metil.[83] Truta is Gertrudis, whose writings nourish our devotion to the divine Heart.

They exist?

Do they exist!

So many have been lost.

Those have not been lost.

How I wished on the fifteenth of November . . .

On the what?

I made a slip, and spoke in my old style. I meant the feast of Saint Gertrude.

Svillig answered Drak's thoughts as accurately as if he had heard them expressed; and seemed not to hesitate; moveover, from the periphery of the subject (namely, why the unhappy Drak had not received those faculties without which a priest feels like a being in abeyance) he pierced to the very centre of it:

You guess, my dear friend, he said, speaking in Latin, so as to introduce the term of affection which would have sounded strange in Bapama, many have been ceaselessly employed trying to find a solution of that difficulty.

I am sure of one.

You remember our first conversation?

Well.

Every churchman who has seen you is sure of what we both know.

Dlar once owned it.

The vicar-general is certain.

And the archbishop?

Does not wish to see you.

Drak hung his head; and Svillig feared the conversation would have to break off.

No, no, Drak, said he firmly. Great courage. We are talking only of facts, not at all of opinions.

Yes, I understand, said he.

For he cannot solve the difficulty; and he tries more than anybody.

I acknowledge my ignorance.

And we our impotence.

So explain whatever it is right for me to know, from the rudiments.

Well, we know you were born.

But not when.

Exactly. You had, and should have, a bishop.

I can name him.

You cannot.

It was . . .

Come back to the difficulty. Dare to tell me you are thousands of years old.

Is that why I am a dead man?

If you promise to leave that for another and probably longer conversation, I will answer "Perhaps". Are you thousands of years old?

How can I be?

How can you be? And yet uncountable intelligent men say that you must be.

What a fix.

You say you are 60 (decimal numeration), he said, with a charmingly malicious smile, which obliterated the last vestige of his anger. We do not believe any of your statements of the kind.

You do not believe me? But here I am; I am in physical & mental health. I give an account of myself with its myriad particulars, which are all harmonious.

I believe you in a desperate, syllogistic way; for you are my friend. But that you were born 114 years ago I must deny; for we have proof that you are older. That you were born in Ia, on the same wild and contradictory understanding, I absolutely deny; for we have a complete list of every birth, in its proper genealogical setting (I mean of the surface race) for the last thousand years. You would bear a certain indelible mark as well; and you are without it. I could see it at this moment if it were there; but it isn't.

If only there had been a celebret[84] in my pocket-book.

But there was none.

But there was none. Come now, a celebret is only a testimony; it needs supposition of the bearer's truth to have what value it has.

No good, Drak; no good.

But surely the Curia . . .[85]

The Curia says: I believe the man was born; I cannot go a step further.

But in time, said Drak, with sinking courage.

In time, barrier after barrier would be surmounted; but the last would be unscalable: admiratio,[86] the astonishment of the laity.

There is the whole empire.

You know what the Carthusians said to you.

Yes.

I don't mean to say that I know; but when you went to see the prior I could not help guessing what your errand was; nor be mistaken in my guess.

And you knew the answer would be just as evident?

Most unhappily, that is true.

What would the laity think?

Every thought known to human folly.

ALL the pleasure part of Villa was its garden. It had not been made in Svillig's day; but neither had he been an unworthy inheritor. There was oak, grey poplar, edible chestnut.

I like the beech, said Svillig; but I prefer it in Dlar's country.

There was a good grove of mulberry trees, growing on lawn-kept grass.

A little contrivance, said Svillig; but nothing exotic, no cutting of hedges, no decapitation of trees; I let the willows grow.

How right.

But flowering plants must be planted and replaced, selected and cultivated.

Aconite. There was a vast spread of it.

You mean the yellow-flowering plant? How beautiful it is. Do you like this?

Iris reticulata.

Iris reticulata, he kept repeating. What do you call this?

Winter crocus.

IT WAS of no use for Drak to pretend to himself or anyone else that

the command he had received from the princess I was anything but a fatigue, a torment, a drenching misery. No one would help him; and when the day and hour came he presented himself in deep wretchedness.

However, as he had so often found, the play acted itself. The stable boys might have been his own; he threw his cloak & helmet into the first hands he saw; shook himself in his clothes, drew over his hood, stroked his beard.

Parek'n Parek.

Two bulky janitors looked like a music-hall turn. Strangely, he thought of them as negroes.

There was a carpet on the stair! At the top were heavy curtains looped up with cords.

Now I am mad. Drak was beginning to worry, in his old style.

Circular vestibule, with a circular carpet. On it a majordomo[87] of military bearing; two servants who elsewhere would have had powdered hair.

Passages & more curtains. At last some ladies; very tall, very slight; black ladies with white complexions. Then . . . Toni.

Introductions; embarrassing for Drak, who lacked all experience of female names & titles. The ladies had each some slight defect, an uncertain consonant, a little deafness.

These blemishes might have been called "the princess's evil";[88] for in the presence of their mistress the sufferers were completely healed, spoke like other people and heard distinctly.

This palace had too a vocabulary of its own. Vara Darling & Toni Boy and other such expressions were in common and frequent use.

The princess sat on a gilt stool, about which tall ladies were palely grouped. There was no pallor about her. Drak knew nothing about

ladies' dress; but even he could see that the princess wore royal robes. Toni said:

Park, Ma'am, bows at your royal feet.

The princess replied in a very beautiful voice; she observed the effect of it upon Drak.

She chose to regard her visitor as a species of wild man, not dangerous, but to be humoured; whose interpreter & exponent her nephew was. And in some strange way Toni Ra was entangled in the imbecility of his charge.

Thus:

Toni, dear, ask man how long Ia.

The princess desires to know, said Toni, how long you have been in Ia.

Drak, as though he were in the drawingroom of Circe,[89] said something of which he himself did not know the meaning.

Toni said:

About a few years, more or less.

Ask man how he like Ia.

Yes, said Park, speaking out of his turn.

Toni interpreted:

He had been deeply impressed by the number and variety of his experiences.

Has man found all well?

He is happy at present.

No one smiled, least of all Drak.

Then the princess addressed him directly in usual Bapama:

While they go and eat their cake, come and sit by me.

Gratefully Drak dropped on the footstool at her feet & knotted his legs into comfort.

Good, said she.

Your servant, Ma'am.

Tell me now, in your country, the ladies, are they beautiful?

Yes, Ma'am.

They are white, aren't they?

Yes, Ma'am.

And beautiful?

Yes, Ma'am.

What do they do?

Needlework.

What else?

They ride.

Ride? What?

Horses.

Horses? What for?

For pleasure.

What pleasure?

Hunting.

The princess I, having extracted a scandalous secret, proceeded in her own way to keep it.

Vara, Wu, Netji, Vi, Zinta, Tu, Anavapala, On . . .

The ladies re-entered hurriedly; and in a torrent of words the princess gave them an exhaustive account of social life in another civilization.

The visit was an entire success. As he left the palace the majordomo

delivered to Drak from her Highness a beautiful box composed entirely of natural sea-shells. It contained a perpetual almanack, which Drak unfortunately broke.

THERE had been long mention of a day underground.

Drak had told Dlar of his day at Villa Gracil; & though he had not specially dwelt upon the scene which took place between the vicariate and the railway station, Dlar recognized that it had made on his friend's mind a deeper impression than appeared evidently.

There must have been, he reflected aloud, some little want of foresight, & I see the cause; but, using the prudence indicated, there is no reason to fear a recurrence; for it is a cause for fear. You are known by description to every police officer, he went on; and they have their instructions; so, even without sending a word of notice, and nothing is simpler, you are practically guaranteed generous breathing room, unless we are rash.

As we shall not be.

We wear our "dreadful" beards. I do not think any superstition enters into it, but terror of dead men is general among the humbler sort. We won't take any food down there; for that would be asking for embarrassment. We might go to a club; but there would be a crowd when we left, and the police might be rough; you never know . . .

The dead men alighted at an unfrequented station. Even so, Drak thought Dlar had been over confident.

There is a little more crowd, he remarked, divining the thought; but we shall get along.

He walked with insolent indifference as though he were on a moor.

The type is repugnant to you, he said; but you will overcome it in a few minutes.

They turned into a broader street.

Now, just pull yourself together, said Dlar, as they reached the end of it.

The warning was opportune; for Drak was stunned by the vision. The broadest street he could have imagined was dense from front to front. The wall opposite had lateral galleries above one another, up and up and up; all crowded. The length in either direction vanished in the perspective.

There sounded a piercing double whistle, answered & repeated until it died in the distance. They plunged into the crowd going left-ward and moved with it.

Let's go to a book-shop, Dlar said slowly.

A great splayed opening, brilliantly illuminated by its own lamp, pointed to its apex, the entrance to the shop. Innumerable books were displayed in the immediate approaches, open and shut; just a shop window, without the window.

The shop recalled the reading-room of the British Museum, in its design and arrangement; and also in the use being made of it by readers, with clerks attending to their wants.

As they passed the barrier into the centre enclosure, the inquisitive could not bear the strain longer; heads bobbed up like those of a herd. Going there at all implied the pretension of learning; and beside, one of the two men was the notorious Reni; and the other ten thousand times notorious.

It seemed to be custom, or at least becoming, that books should be brought and displayed upon a stand. Newness, typography, format, design; all possible properties of books were exemplified and commented by the two book-lovers.

Presently it was a portfolio of drypoint engravings. Drak exclaimed with pleasure at the sight of them.

I know this man's work.

I do not think it's possible, said Dlar.

These engravings are by a man whose name I do not know.

Coye'i the scene-painter.

Thank you—who engraved a zinc plate.

It was not zinc.

Well, whatever it was, which I have seen . . .

Pray where?

In Cuan's hut.

In Cuan Niger's hut? Well, perhaps yes; Edni does unaccountable deeds.

No man other could have drawn these; except a man in my time.

Drak was silent and blushing.

What's the matter? Do you want the portfolio?

I do, said Drak; but it's so odd, I have not the least idea how to buy a thing.

You just take it. "Park, you know", he said to the clerk.

How do you mean?

It's charged against your crop and sales. The auditor might reject it: but in fact he will not. You could send up ten times that.

Pause. Dlar said to someone:

Could you fetch that copy of the bound work?

In this unfolding world, stimulated to use whatever black brains he had, Park saw what was forward as the great volumes were produced: a princely present from Dlar.

For empanelled on the sides of the binding were the Park colours:

diagonal bars of ash and dim rose and a round, back & front, of inlay: his badge, the sailing ship & the motto Dormio, sed cor meum vigilat. And the work itself!

It was all too precious; and he had to judge hard, to be rightly restrained in his acknowledgments. He succeeded, for Dlar said:

See the best of all, as to the embellishment; and with that he displayed the painted inside of the boards, in glowing opus Iense,[90] golden without the use of gold.

Scenes from the Summa,[91] said the giver, in reverent and delicate banter.

Such indeed were the subjects: for there may be lovely and expressive emblems of what is abstract.

And he . . . said Dlar, looking towards a man.

Drak could only stare, as he tried to master his feelings.

The man was a rodent in whom age had emphasized the features of the race, adding all the insults time matures; who wore, most horribly, great convex amber spectacles. Drak was only aroused by Dlar calmly finishing his sentence.

. . . is the man whose taste and knowledge composed this masterwork for the painter to execute.

Hil'nu, he said, introducing him, is a great scholar. He may tell you all he knows, but I could not do so.

Hil'nu said he was honoured, and that he was a student; but he explained all the paintings. How delightful it was; what humour and rich allusion.

Would Hil'nu . . . Drak began.

Too delicate, Dlar whispered; but ask him nevertheless.

THE DEAD men left the rotunda.

Dlar was reciting to himself: O res mirabilis! Manducat Dominum; and Drak finished the phrase: pauper, servus et humilis.[92]

Drak was struck by the absence of doors in the doorways, even to a church. They entered a lighted tunnel at the end of which they found themselves in the vestibule and next in the church itself.

There was exposition.[93] They prostrated themselves and knelt, two among a crowd of people, kneeling or standing motionless. A passage was clear right down the vast building. By the enclosure of the presbyterium[94] they took two cloaks from a rail and put them on. Drak followed his companion round the back of the high altar into a spacious choir, where again there were many men, among them not a few ecclesiastics in surplices or rochets.[95]

Drak knew what his business was, and tried to attend to it; but when their visit was at an end he had a clear enough idea of the monstrance[96] and its pedestal. The latter was stone, circular in plan, increasing to the base in a gentle curve; the inspiration had been the trunk of a tree; and the pedestal at its foot melted into an ascending flight of steps, also circular in plan, but from a different centre. The whole structure covered the floor of a rounded alcove as to half its area, and the rest came forward. All the wall of this alcove was cased with small plates which seemed to be ivory. From the pedestal rose a column of natural crystal which at the desired height took the form of a four-sided receptacle, now enclosing the actual monstrance, which had been placed inside it by a door towards the alcove from the top step; above this the columnar form was resumed.

Swags and pendants of natural leaves and flowers were disposed symmetrically.

In multitude and variety were candlesticks of painted smithwork, with lighted candles, standing on the pavement of the choir.

Though with reticence, Dlar confirmed, as they left the church, that the precious materials were as supposed.

For, said he, it was right to use in worship the rare things of the creation. It would not be becoming to make use of such choice substances, nor decent to covet them, for personal ornament; and it would be futile as well; for carrion (one of his synonyms for men and women) could be sufficiently adorned with imitations of diamonds . . .

. . . and pearls, added Drak.

Ah, he sighed, there you name a tragedy; pearl is now only a word. What was a pearl like?

Drak was put to it to describe a pearl; but he persisted hopefully.

Like a soaring bubble? asked Dlar.

Yes, but dull, with a certain tenderness to the eye; some seeds suggest the appearance; they were rather heavy.

And women wore them?

Yes.

Was it allowed?

It was approved, applauded, envied. I have seen a woman with pearls tied round her waist.

Tied like a rope?

Perhaps not that. But the expression "ropes of pearls" was known.

Drak thought a moment and said: You mustn't think that I disapproved of ladies wearing pearls.

What ladies?

Those who possessed them.

You know better now.

I have made you sad.

That's true.

THEY had gone out by a different passage; & on through winding, branching tunnels.

What's the sound? asked Drak.

No one could tell you. There are strange acoustic effects; it is evidently some industry; some punch at work; it may be at a really great distance; it's not disagreeable.

No.

Dlar, quietly resourceful, had recalled to mind deserted passages and caverns.

You may be lonely if you use a little judgment, said he.

It was a strolling ground, enclosed by its walls, without shops, dwellings, or galleries; just pillared space. Here and there was a dot of human beings. Drak no longer reacted to vastness; & all the less as a new sight arrested his attention: one end, namely, of the piazza, which was a natural cavern, pleasing by the incidence of its shadows, and fantastic in its stalactite formation. They could not but turn their steps towards it.

It was converted to pleasure, lighted enough, railed in dangerous places, provided with short runs of steps; & bridges hopped the gulfs. There was a purr of water, invisible in the depths; hard to catch, however, for the rustle of little torrents. There were alcoves as it were for conversation; and a pacing length for such as might be finishing off a quarrel. They reached a circular alcove having a bench cut round it. They stood still for Drak to be astonished; for at intervals on this stone bench sat archaic figures cut in the living rock; figures at once friendly and horrible, figures which seemed to say: We are as we

were made; there can be no question. They sat, powerful in their volutes of drapery, holding illegible objects with dreadful strength.

High-relieved on the roof, but carved without any structural reference to it or to one another, were two figures of angels, if they could be so called; for they bore some indication of wings. The friends were seated side by side, and looking up at them, when most unexpectedly a high-pitched resounding singing of one voice began. Both were held by it so that they remained in their then attitude. To Drak it was unearthly in its fervour and pathos, though the singer was manifestly young; & they never knew if it was boy or girl.

When they had waited in vain for the song to begin again, Drak saw his own pleasure, but not his own surprise, mirrored in the face of his friend.

You arranged it, Drak hazarded.

Not at all as you mean.

You were responsible in some way.

In some way. You like it?

You are the author of the song.

Did you catch the words?

Yes, but I only remember the end:

Lin on ti vip'thu copi thou,

Len, len, len i'n lon.

Please repeat them to me.

August on the downs, said Drak, when he had heard the whole poem.

They talked on, and Dlar's drift was that this trifle was in no way in the Wapama taste; but, as was perhaps discernible, he had had English models in his mind.

I have turned it into English, said Drak presently. Will you hear it?

Joyfully.

Lambs are drifting up the slope
As in silence they feed;
Little clouds, so still the day,
Seem wandering overhead.

No sound on all the down.
All the day long.
The minstrel no one else has heard
Sings, sings, sings his song.

Thank you; & the dead men repeated the version, improving it as they did so, until there was no need to write it down.

I say.

What?

You're concealing something from me.

Of course; lots of things.

No, I mean you are hiding something with industrious concealment.

You are instructed to find it out?

Yes; but, as you must know, the information is such that I needed no instructions to pursue it.

How have you got on?

Pretty far. I thought I would ask you; for your satisfaction as well as my own. It's that vehicle, or vehicles.

I know.

Well, what's your decision?

They called the class: internal combustion machines.

Vacuum produced by explosion of gas, said Dlar. What's the other principle?

Revolving shaft. Now I should have to think.

Don't trouble, let the engineers do their own work.

It's better.

I can see, Dlar mused, that it must have been an accursed thing.

Park was opening his mouth to say something; but so slowly that Dlar said:

Do you prefer to go lower or up?

Oh, up.

OLI came to Park.

Remember, said Dlar, with a last anxious warning, that Oli is worth every forbearance.

Drak was a little tired of this.

What is Oli? he asked, to conceal his impatience.

Officially, head of the translations; socially, everywhere accepted; personally, a cultured man; intellectually, formidable. There he is; let's go in the vestibule.

Oli was gigantic with fur, clothing never worn by the black classes. He had a complete set of top clothes made of skin-lined skins, excepting only belt and collar. Many peninsula bears must have contributed to his astounding aspect; for feet, legs, hands and head were all swathed, as well as his body.

Whether it was Dlar's foresight or the servants' knowledge, as Oli was divested of his furs the giant woman-butler was at hand with a

quilted cloak, possibly a more usual garment for ladies. Oli did not wince.

Nor at table or at ease did he show any recognition of peculiar attentions: queer drinks, some hot; oil served to him at table, as a sauce which he used with everything.

I have tried maniacally, said he, to get hold of that report, the draft, or proof, or office copy; but whenever I caught it it was somewhere else. You cannot dry your hands with an eel. So here I am with wet and empty hands.

The three went into the library; blazing fire, well-arranged screens, all the little collection of books flat on the table, on which was a dish of hellebore. Oli took in all the dispositions. He showed first interest in the wonderful Summa Theologica; and without vanity gave a specimen of his knowledge.

Impossible to say whether his appreciation of the inside or the outside were more intricate; from codices and editions to the names and antecedents of the artists and binders whose work they beheld.

All this time, as the event proved, he was judging what should be his own contribution to the library Park was forming.

He found much to approve of; for Svillig, Koti, Edni the Prince, even little Toni, had been behind Park's desires and tastes; and old Dr Eza, his unmerciful friend, and many a learned man and scientific body had shown deserved gratitude for generous trouble Park had placed at their service; even taxing his poor musical gifts, and worse musical memory, when people grave enough desired him to do so.

At length Oli loitered at the manuscript book in which the owner was in process of writing out, at Reni's request, sentences of literary interest and poems which he was able to remember.

Oli thought aloud:

As handwriting, cursive . . .

of my period, said Park, maliciously; remembering unnumbered conflicts.

Of your period, said Oli, also remembering. You could show me (another time) the derivation from the uncial[97] which preceded?

There has been another uncial?

Oh, yes.

I could do what you ask; and, I think, display a number of stable intermediate forms.

That would be most acceptable.

Caprice of memory had determined what the scrap-book should contain; Drak's inclination was to include everything he could remember which had any good quality. He blushed for its character of morceaux choisis.[98] There was

Captain or colonel or knight at arms,[99]

facing

Hear, my beloved, an old Milesian story.[100]

You may yourself have written one or the other of those poems, said Oli; but not both.

The question is easier solved than that.

I see.

As this was not at all Dlar's way of looking even at poetry, he burst a diversion.

Turn over a bit, said he, to that sonnet; and he himself declaimed:

When forty winters shall besiege thy brow,

And dig deep trenches in thy beauty's field.[101]

How he laughed.

I believe that the poet means fifty-five when he writes forty; what do you think?

That it is first-rate, said Park hotly.

You mean desperately poetical.

Oli refused to be engaged, seeing as he thought a violent quarrel rapidly rising; and to all appeals weakly shrugged his narrow shoulders.

I mean, said Drak, that it is sober and adequate as poetical expression.

Assertions & contradictions were certainly growing warm.

If you people, said Park, know who the man is . . .

Who the man is? How do you mean?

Yes, is; I mean is.

Both remained silent a long time, while Oli struggled with the sonnet to get the sense.

There could be no question of deliberation when Park began very slowly:

A military man . . .

He realized that, on three counts at least, he had said enough and too much. He looked at Reni and saw that he thought so too. The look was that mixture, possible only in unimprovable friendship, of defiance and confidence of indulgence; yet not without misgiving.

Dead Reni reflected. Then he said, in English:

Park, you got me. I confess I did think the field was a ploughed field. Remember I am a farmer.

All laughed, while Park was struck with the abyss between black and white. But Oli, thrilled by the atmosphere of erudition, said also in English (and who could blame him for speaking sententiously):

That poem was written at the beginning of sea-power.

The butler came and said, gigantically:

The noblemen must hurry their bath to be in time for the prayer.

During supper Reni interjected, though it was a pity to leave all the trails that had been opened:

Sea-power.

Yes, said Oli; those toddling cargo-boats were sailing from port to port very much like ours, I have no doubt. Then the pirates met them, just as if they had run into a fog or an iceberg; and there was . . .

With that he looked at Park, who finished the sentence:

dirty business.

After that the pirates met other pirates.

Park and Reni laughed.

Fleets, cargo fleets, fighting squadrons; better ships, heavier weapons; maps of the sea, wonderful navigation.

Go on, said the dead men.

Perfection at last, with the application of mechanical force, such as no one will ever know. Is it true?

Yes, said Park.

Wealth, pride, envy, until the sea was scored in every direction like a dark engraving. Do I exaggerate?

No.

As equality is only an idea, the sea-power belonged at length to one navy; and what became of it?

What became of the others? you mean.

Also, said Oli; and stopped.

What did become of that sea-power?

It is supposed, said Reni, that our occupation of territory was a matter of months, I mean rather than of centuries; for it took centuries to consolidate all. It was a struggle against those inexterminable men. I can only tell you what is plausible, and in harmony with the known conclusion.

Which is what?

We came to an unholy understanding with Belial; who got nothing out of it; for the two fleets at last went drifting and fighting into the unknown seas.

No sea was unknown.

Known or unknown, there they went; & there they remain.

Believe me, the ships we are interested in are floating still, Park asserted recklessly.

It is strange that you should say so, said Oli; for if ever merchant ships are swept into that region, added to the natural horrors men hear hideous explosions; and, close against them in the fog, grey towns pass, with their citadels over-towering.

With lights? asked Park.

No; no lights.

And sound?

Nothing but the sound of men singing.

They thought they heard clatter; and at the same time came the announcement:

A mounted message.

It was startling, for the night was well through. A man entering busily, just as he had ridden, still in his cloak & helmet. The three men sprang to their feet at the sight of A Ra's badge. They all recognized the equerry.

His Highness, said he, using less formality, commands Park to sup with the household on Nativity Eve,[102] and to continue a member of it until His Highness's pleasure is fully known.

Park treated the messenger as though he were the sovereign, and said:

At once.

Swiftly and easily, with few syllables it was understood that nothing but the usual rest, and a little refreshment, was required.

We have with us unridden horses.

Park and Reni, in the movement of hospitality, snatched the time to compose the formal reply.

Oli gleaned a little gossip.

Reni became like a proud mother to his exotic friend, as he called him in his thoughts, though he never used the words nor any like them.

To put himself in Park's place as guest of the prince taxed even his judgment and imagination. No such rough rule as "Do nothing", "Look pleased", "Do what you are told to do", could satisfy him as friend, artist, magnanimous dead man.

He wished Park to arrive in the palace appropriately ignorant, and depart chastened. He wished all his demeanour, acts and words for three days to satisfy expectations & wear a finish of nicety. It was none of his wisdom to impose lessons in deportment and he considered it his part for a week to speak and act and think and be such that, supposing in Park the intelligence he had no temptation to doubt, he might pass through the ordeal in a manner worthy of himself and his tutor and yet think that he had been spontaneous all the time.

He began.

Leaving Oli asleep they went to mass on foot through the snow; and

after getting a drink at a croft, they mounted the horses that met them; and spare horses followed unled, making for Reni. It was a still day.

The reader desiring to follow their route might take Bartholomew's[103] map and find Minchinhampton. Park was between the villages of Cherrington and Rodmarton. They took the direction Crudwell, Minety, Swindon (as they saw it, a ravishing district, quietly undulating, cultivated without rapacity and beautifully wooded). Reni was to the eastern edge of it at the place now called Ashbury.[104] Dlar had a fine enough view from his house, particularly from the roof, but the glory of the situation was the down, above to the south, where he and his friends could ride and gallop their fill.

How I should like to cross the sea with you, Drak, he said as they rode.

Park looked at him and made no answer.

We could get the permission. Short sea-crossing from the mouth of the Esi: then it is an incomparable ride east to the cornland. There are abundance of great, old-fashioned farms, all timber and brick; such hospitality; cultivation varied and delightful.

Park was staring.

We should have to cross the cornland by train; not very agreeable. Then once over the mountains we are in the horse country.

Is that agreeable?

In a higher, bigger and better way, it is.

What is there there?

Nothing but horses. All our horses come from there.

Are the men black?

No, no, no; but very good fellows; so rough and simple; ways and language of their own.

No black men?

Only by chance; you will see. I mean, if we go.

Haven't you to be born to a life like theirs? For what we mean by culture must be absent.

Of course, but think of the compensations; the roughness, wildness & privation; sleeping on the ground in all weathers; and wild jobs in the dark.

Respect for black men?

Respect for horsemanship.

It's not quite the same thing.

No, & they think they are on an equality. They are a tough lot.

They rode into the Reni yard; bathed and changed; and went into the library to look at the treasures.

Dlar was engraving a plate, a whirlwind of animals in motion. He detected Park's faint smile as he showed him the design, and said:

Coye'i.

I like it, said Park.

You do? And he considered it himself, absorbed.

Park began reciting:

It is an ancient mariner,

And he stoppeth one of three . . .[105]

Yes, said Reni; go on with your memories; and I'll be putting in a few scratches.

If only I might remember it; it is long.

But as he tried, and jotted down fragments, he was thinking of this gentle existence in comparison with the wild life of the steppes.

For at Reni there was uncommon elegance.

WHERE Park set down was a long way from the palace; though the yard was above some of its depths. There was prodigious movement of carriages, horses, drivers and grooms. He was quickly picked out; led through the coping and across the grass to the entrance of a passage to that part of the palace where his business lay.

The servant who took him over walked before him until he met the officer appointed to entertain him. This gentleman had with him, beside his own attendants, Park's principal servant for his stay.

Park had to say whether he would rest; & elected to be guided by the steward.

The five corridors off this gallery, said he, are ours, guests and stewards, inclusively and exclusively. We will, if you please, make a journey in other directions.

This consisted of visits to great and greater rooms of state, reached by corridors it was a pleasure to be in, for the sake of their austere design, & the opportunities they afforded to look down stairways which would have baffled Piranesi.[106] The structure of the rooms was almost all that Park could attend to; but his inquisitive glances at particular objects did not escape his guide.

For in a circular apartment with a top light, the old steward slackened his steps as thought it were a destination. It contained statues, human figures, just above life-size, single & groups of two, archaic in feeling, and each representing a restrained movement. All the faces were expressive; and the more so from being fitted with naturalistic eyes of different material; & teeth too, if there was occasion. The statues were of various material: hard stone, natural wood, perhaps metal;

for one was enamelled all over. Some were painted in polychrome, but without naturalism.

Park looked at the works with leisure, as though the steward had ceased to exist; and this appeared to be right.

The next apartment visited contained works of art in the flat, like the sculpture subordinated to the general aspect of the room. The content was unspeakably over-rich. Park felt he would need to be appointed custodian of the gallery ever to comprehend what it contained. Moreover Toni Ra came in and greeted him familiarly.

Together they passed to a gallery of pottery. Park could not have contained his wonder; but the hum for prayer was heard, and all stood motionless.

Toni's white eyes fixed Park steadily under his coral eyebrows; so he made the sign of the cross and led the prayers. The steward knelt, but the prince remained standing. The steward from the folds of his garment produced a metal card and handed it to Park, who read from it the prayer for the archprince and his house.

Park was led back to his servants.

One more interpretation of an invariable programme, the evening passed never more rapidly. The last flush of the banquet had died from the youngest cheek. Someone in the character of M. C. made the announcement:

Assembly in the Hall of Pillars, in silence & unattended; with four exceptions. His Highness, on appearing, will proceed at once, attended by the princes, to his place in the choir. All present follow in the order of their precedence: they will be directed in the cathedral by the masters of ceremonies.

Park & another had particular directions to follow last.

In silence all moved to their quarters, for one purpose to re-appear in freshly prepared clothes and new shoes.

Owing to his allotted place in the procession, Park found himself in the Hall of Pillars at the foot of the steps by which the prince would descend.

He was fat. His clothes were dazzlingly white. His shoes were tied round his bare ankles. He wore no badge, nor other ornament that Park could see. He passed evenly down the hall, followed by the princes, by the whole household.

The Hall of Pillars was very deep down; and yet it was a long descent; for the cathedral was entered at floor level. At the exit of the palace there was a tent erected, passing through streets, as Park supposed; for about a mile, as he judged. Feet made scarcely a whisper, and there was silence in the bowels of the earth.

When Park and his companion reached the cathedral door, they were taken by a sacristan to the chapel where they were to vest; for they were to be the acolytes.

Park, like a drowning man, abandoned himself to the space and the crowd.

There seemed to be plenty of time.

The procession formed. Park, with his restless, distracted habit, had begun by noticing the types, the linen, the vestments, the processional cross, the candlestick he himself carried; until, moved with contrition, he said to himself:

There is nothing more beautiful nor more terrible than the mass; and, with eyes downcast, he went about his business as an acolyte.

On the way to the altar the antiphon pealed; Ecce sacerdos magnus.

The bishop, he reflected; and that was all.

He recalled his days as a student in Rome, when he had assisted at great functions; and felt happy.

One feature affected him deeply, the genuflection at the words Et incarnatus est; but it always did.[107]

But then another. When the credo had been sung, priests in stoles came before the altar for reverence; there were hundreds of them; and dispersed by great groups in all directions of the church. He supposed that they were going to administer the Bread of Life to that world of famished souls. And with that he went to carry wine and water to the deacons.

After the ministers, the sovereign & the other princes, nobles and gentlemen knelt and received Holy Communion at the stretched cloth. When all had risen, Park observed that the deacons moved with the cloth down towards the entrance to the sanctuary. The acolytes took their torches to accompany the bishop and the assistant priest.

It was one child kneeling on the step, whose face was the colour of an altar-bread, with shut eyes, and streaming black hair, with lips and tongue like a rose.

Corpus Domini nostri Jesu Christi custodiat animam tuam in vitam aeternam amen.[108]

Park served private masses all night. At one of them his fellow-server was the archprince.

At some time or other a stranger found him and rescued him with the brief words Come on. He then first realized his fatigue, if not exhaustion. For four hours his poor, wrung heart had been filled with the love of Christ.[109]

I seem to want something, he said; a wash, I think.

Food, air, said the stranger without ceremony.

Once outside the cathedral, they ran through the deserted covered way, and up those stately steps, three at a stride.

The stranger stayed with him until he was ready and then led him

rapidly he knew not where. There was a din of talk in the great apartment.

Just stand near His Highness, said the stranger.

Such is our common descent that in a minute all distinction of race and time, but not quite ever of rank, was gone. Talking rapidly, the prince, ignoring proffered trays, went to the sideboard to discover and extinguish appetites. Catching Park's eye, he pointed with his fat, black finger to a morsel, which Park took and ate. He kept repeating this action; till Park had to laugh, and he laughed too.

Come to the library, he said.

As he moved to the door, he called out:

Where are all those men? Where's Edni? Where's Uncle Zi? Where's Koti? Where's the bishop? Where's Na'a? Toni, where are you? Where's Monsignor Villa? Where's the general? Where (with the faintest pause) is Reni?

They'll find 'em. Come on.

In the library he changed; enough for Park to recognize in him a student.

Books, judging by analogy, must have been there; but only on the table were any to be seen. The prince walked up to a pile, evidently from its neatness placed there by his orders.

These should interest you.

They do indeed, sir.

Read the little one, he said, there's only one copy; this one is the big report, the others are appendixes.

Park did as he was told. A good many men came in. Someone brought him a lectern to support the book; for it was a folio. He read fast:

P. the subject is a normal human being. (He synopsized as his eyes tore over the pages.) His body is complete, except that he has lost

four teeth, unfortunately not replaced; slightly bald, good sight and hearing; intelligence fair; most of his reactions good.

He is presumed to be well educated according to some unknown system. He is believed to have knowledge of other languages beside that which he speaks by birth. He speaks base Latin; & this has proved most convenient for ready communication with him until he has learned Bapama: but true knowledge of that language he cannot be said to possess. His knowledge of religion is wide and orthodox. Whatever other learning he possesses cannot, without injustice to the subject, be judged by comparison with Bapama standards: but he may be safely described as a cultured man, for he responds to tests which only a cultured man could satisfy.

He recognizes at once the good qualities of buildings & other works of art, even showing at times some little refinement. He can draw; but only indifferently well.

He is courageous, modest, perhaps diffident; he is bad tempered; he is truthful, with some power of dissimulation; but here allowance is due to his peculiar position. He has a sense of humour; and, among men he trusts (and his nature is affectionate), he is often vivacious.

He is not known to have any vices. However, in this connection traces have been discovered adhering to his teeth, of a substance which has not been identified; & the same is found in abundance in some dry vegetable remains which he had in his possession; and even more in an instrument through which it was used (or abused) by him.

The vegetable remains, putrid, were enclosed in a bag of very great interest.[110]

Long descriptions of Park's clothing, noting the entire absence of linen.

Interesting chronometer with curious applications of mechanical principles already known, with one exception (unintelligible to Park, as described).

The subject's account of himself agrees in part with these observations.

So much Park gleaned, missing a great deal as though he had the hope of seeing the book again.

The question of his origin has been, & will be further studied. The appendixes treat of it. As to the place, his allegations are totally denied as untenable; they appear in his sworn statement (Appendix I). As to the time, his statements are (same Appendix) two in number; both absurd; insanely irreconcilable; and more so with the fact, whatever it may prove to be.

Hypotheses are almost as many as the persons who have advanced them.

That which is favoured by the best intelligence is (with permission) somewhat as follows:

The subject was born about 300 years ago, in some remote community, probably mountainous, for mountains have a peculiar and exhilarating effect on the subject, unknown to the infidels, for it is probably in their territory, where religion and culture have, Deo adiuvante,[111] survived.

He may have been a theocrat; for it is the firm opinion of all who have interviewed him that he is, as he believes himself to be, a priest; and the possession of a chronometer by a man found almost in rags is significant.

The supposition is that through some great misadventure, whether vicious & excessive indulgence (favoured), bereavement, crime, disgrace, fear of torture, or rash psychic experiment (extremely favoured), he came under the domination of a remote ancestral survival in his consciousness; so thoroughly that he acts, speaks, thinks, and remembers in the person of that ancestor.

This hypothesis offers the best suggestion of how he reached Ia &

why he came hither. He would have been impelled to return to the place of his origin as indicated by his hallucination.

Thorough enquiry has not found the least trace of evidence that his presence in the island was known to anyone until Edni Ra's servant arrested him. Though the suggestion is bewildering, it is that he arrived with fruit, which was unloaded in enormous bulk at this time, at one of the wharves of the Kottatil; got ashore in the darkness, and made his way under cover of plantations and hedges to the spot on the low down where he was detected. This is the least hazardous part of the conjecture, for he is a stealthy & powerful walker. He was not hungry when Cuan Niger found him; but, according to the man, very tired.

The rapid survey, under the peculiar conditions, and the objective view of his own character, stiffened Park's spirit, quieted his nerves, & strengthened his dignity. But the voice of the prince awoke him from deep abstraction.

It's good, eh?

Yes, sir; it is good.

Filled with error, I suppose.

Yes, sir; so far as I am competent to judge.

You shall tell me about it. I have not yet visited Park. They tell me you have already a charming library. Some part of this report should be added to it. It cannot be what you have been reading; for that was prepared specially for me. The state paper (however excusably) is offensive. You shall have the appendixes, all of them, and none of them are accessible to the public; for, as pure scientific observation, they are worthy of a scholar's attention.

The library was filled with men. Something was forward, and Park alone seemed not to know what it was. At a signal the prince moved,

and the whole crowd followed him up steps. Svillig came near Park and whispered:

Dlar is here.

Hulloa Svillig; is he? What is to happen?

Dancing.

From the vestibule they came into the air, the Princes' Court. There was a carriage standing; and facing it an escort of scouts with lances. Behind the royal carriage were others in two ranks, round half the enormous circumference. The prince and a very old man got into the carriage. The scouts trotted ahead, all the other carriages moved. Very quickly all were rattling out into the blue of the frosty day. It was so fast and jolly that there was a certain amount of overtaking. The chilly tried to cover their heads and hide their hands. The road beggared Edni's in all respects; & much engineering had gone to its construction. Park was with Koti Ra.

You have made an extraordinary impression on the prince, he said. This expedition is supposed to be due to you, he added.

Park make no reply.

Well, believe that you are going to enjoy yourself.

Yes, said Park, recovering; I do and will.

That's right. Reni is here.

So I understand.

Koti talked so kindly.

We are going to a college of young people, boys and girls. It is a very old college. Villa and Reni were both there. So was I, though you might not believe it; for the children are all beautiful. So was the prince.

All beautiful?

Yes, said Koti, gravely; a peculiar type sometimes appears among us, noticeable for one thing by the colour of the hair. They are called three-blood children.[112]

You interest me.

I thought I should. The young people are never mated.

Why?

It is believed that such a union would be unfruitful.

They marry others?

Why, yes; I am married. Many receive sacred orders or enter religion. Some remain unmarried.

That is not disapproved?

No, you must respect the heart.

There was a spacious dancing platform with an inclined approach to it from the side of the college buildings; on the other a stand for spectators. The children were seen pouring out to the verandah, the girls chiefly distinguishable by their greater size.

A sort of glorified carpenter came and surveyed the scene; & had the awning drawn so as to have half and half light and shadow on the dancing floor. A crowd of children came tripping, bouncing, stamping upon it; & a big girl at once ordered most of them off.

The little orchestra came strolling, girls with flutes, a boy with a fiddle and another with cymbals.

The last gave a bang. Eight children performed a most slovenly reverence to the prince and lined up with a good deal of care and inaudible whispering.

Park supposed, correctly, that they did not wish to stare at himself, however briefly, under whatever pretext; for he was at the prince's left, with Reni on his other hand. And the prince gave him a knowing glance.

The dance was not Hunsdon House;[113] but all the same it was the authentic deathless tradition, with which time had not played too many tricks; though there was a peculiarity most fatiguing for the dancers: whenever a boy had a stamp, he doubled it. Park was thrilled; and neither of his neighbors spoke.

The children knew they were doing well from the start; and they danced with more and better swing until they were up to the very edge of restraint, & all knew it was the last dance.

The prince beckoned, oh, so slightly; and, although no face was turned towards him, two boys ran over to him; then a few more; then all the children were round him, laughing and chattering. After a little they scattered among all the spectators.

As the prince walked across to the college followed by everybody, two porters were seen coming obliquely with a princely crate of oranges, and others with bulging baskets.

The prince made himself no more than an extra big boy.

Let's have Dom Reni's song, said he; the Lark.

Out of doors, the children shouted.

Out they went; and, standing on the frozen grass, they lifted their lovely faces to the zenith, & sang; the song dying away.

Isn't he coming down? asked the prince, to break the emotion.

Oh, do let him stay up, it's so blue, said a very little boy; and flung himself into the hands of the prince.

On the road back Edni, with whom he drove, spoke very guardedly to Park of the kind of life led by members of the household.

When he left, with Reni, to return to Park, he received an increase of rank.

THE WINTER was a happy time. The cultivation interested the owner

of Park, and he gave as much time to his farm as did Reni to his. There was a succession of visitors, either at Reni or Park, to extend the intellectual activities of the two friends. Many celebrities remained no more than names. Dlar knew what he was about; by no means did mere position ever penetrate to either yard.

If celebrities came unbidden they were marvellously entertained, more mortuorum,[114] as Reni said grimly.

A tomb is a very exclusive apartment.

It was different when A Ra's hinted visit occurred. For court reasons there was a bunch of them then. But the prince knew how to keep them in their position of furniture; and used his knowledge.

A waggon-load of entertainment accessories was the only announcement; and some packages addressed to Park. The books were varied; and each showed clearly enough who had made selection of them. Thus:

A sumptuous Vulgate;[115] a complete breviary; the great dictionary; the history of dancing; a classic on farm management; portfolios of engravings; and the promised appendixes. It recalled to Park his first miserable little mail, when he lay wounded and terrified in what he knew now to have been a hovel.

Sentimentally, and in itself, the best thing that came over was a portrait of A Ra. It was a metal plate with metal inlay & enamel as to its substance. Drawing, massing, colour and quality were superb. The artist had treated the model with a freedom which, in Park's judgment, beyond others was the supreme merit of the work. And yet, among all men, actual and possible, it was the portrait of A, hereditary prince and vassal of his lordship the Emperor. The marvel was that a living man should be portrayed in a manner to which age and rarity would add no charm. What, mused Park, holding his breath with fear, might not the portrait of the Emperor be. But a black

mind allowed itself no such imaginings. As he hoped to have a black mind, he dismissed those imaginings piously and resolutely.

The picture exactly fitted the principal panel in the library; and he had it placed there, no longer wondering at miracles of prevision and contrivance. The afternoon sun did splendours upon the plate as the sovereign walked into the room & raised towards it his mild white eyes.

Park bowed his head in silence; & that was what was wanted.

PLEASANT academical evenings, as Reni ironically called them, took time. He would go with him, to share Park's suffering. Stupid cordiality, offensive praise, there was no fee the "bodies" would not pay; but the "extramurality" (Reni's term) of the proceedings enraged the lecturer. Passionate, servile appeals came even from distant cities, with hints of academical honours; but further than Ito he would not go; nor even there unless he had the big theatre of whatever "body" it was; and no one addressed him unless addressed.

If I don't know English, he would say in the tongue to Reni, I am not a dead man. The muck those fellows talk.

> You ought to be D. C. L.,[116] Reni would answer, to egg him to speak even more to the point.

But Kottatil!

Ah, Kottatil was a different place; a stuffy, different place, old Kottatil. Any boy there could draw Park's portrait on the wall; and many did. It was an art centre.

Thus those dead men amused themselves with bitter words.

PARK came to the chalk down. There were some new horses & the weather was open. Reni was nervously bright.

You've heard about Svillig? No, of course you couldn't. You'd left home.

What?

He's a bishop.

Bishop. What was he?

At any rate not prince archbishop of Kano.

Park made as though to scream.

Reni said with a terribly nervous laugh:

Not Kano the great, you unimaginable lunatic. I mean Kano of Istia.

Park didn't know what to answer.

It has not gone at all well with that man Cuan.

Park showed his sadness at bad news added to Reni's insulting words.

Where is he?

In the islands.

No answer.

It's not your case only, but lots of things. Come, Drak, we must be great, great, great friends. I was thinking a good thought. I was thinking that after the bath we will sing vespers. I will have every soul on the estate. We shall all like it, poor people. Largire lumen vespere.[117]

Right, Reni. It's the Forty Martyrs of Sebaste.[118]

I was not thinking of it: but that, as it happens, is the dedication of my oratory.

If capricious, this was the true Reni; for he was devout. How different from his then frame of mind, like that of a man expatriated!

Park called, said the maid.

He went to the speaking room.

Is it Drak?

Yes, Monsignore.

Svillig, Drak, if you please.

We are very much upset.

Be kind to Dlar; that's all.

He showed himself on the blue plate.

Far on in the night Reni said:

That Cuan, you know; he has done nothing really wrong; it's only an accumulation. Edni thinks a great deal of him. He will be back before others.

As a flash of lightning reveals the unknown relation of visible things: the mountains close at hand, the river high above its supposed bed, Park's mental view became clear.

Dlar, said he, if you go to the horse country, I go too.

That's not a black thought, said Reni; beside, don't use your prophetic gift.

So be it.

That's more like it. We gallop in the morning.

Let's gallop now.

It's still too dark. The horses will be horribly afraid of us as it is.

After breakfast Reni said:

I have to be a week in Kottatil.

Do I go?

No, I'll ride with you to Park.

PARK, in the absence of his friend, forgot the anger he shared with

Reni, which perhaps was inspired by him; anger because he was not offered even a lectureship by the leakiest henroost of a university.

But his own he could not forget.

He rode, indignantly unattended, to the Charterhouse, and announced himself. The prior invited him into a cloister, in which they walked, in silence as the rule required. At the opening, he led into the garden and took the first long path. Without preamble:

Whatever impression I may have given you, I intended finality at our last interview, and intended you to understand. I care for none of your quibbles, and I am not the ecclesiastical authority. If you are not in rebellion, my words will do you no harm; and if you are, they may do you good. Men come to the Charterhouse in a spirit you have never possessed. You will not find here an escape from worldly difficulties merely because you are unable to solve them in a way you would have preferred. A boy who has climbed to the top of the Ondo mast must not, because he cannot make up his mind to climb down, expect to find a trap-door in the sky. I do not like to risk offence by telling you what you know; but for men of every position & every origin there is only one way to peace: purification of the heart, and the proper direction of the energies. You understand me.

I want peace, Father.

Persevere in that wish, my son.

At least, give me your blessing, Father.

God bless you.

Fine order the Carthusian, Park reflected.

The prior gave him a precious book: Pharetra divini amoris.[119]

He rode to the Carmel[120] near his home. He had been twice in a parlour, but had never spoken to the prioress.

Deo gratias, said the voice.

Deo gratias.[121] I am speaking to the mother prioress?

Yes.

In the silence which followed he felt sure the nun was praying. He thought first of naming himself; and then that it was unnecessary. Instead he said:

I have need of prayers; many and great prayers.

We have only one instrument, and it is prayer.

Do you pray for the dead?

Yes, very much. For the living also.

Will you pray for Park of Park?'

I do. I began to do so on the feast of the Assumption.[122]

Will you continue?

Yes. I am sure you will pray for us. We need prayers.

HE WENT to mass long before dawn. Immediately after he mounted and rode to Edni's villa. By this time it was light. Edni was from home, and there were no guests. He had some breakfast and formed the sudden resolution to take a walk, a remedy he had never tried.

He borrowed a pair of farm boots and set out in a northerly direction. It was the most lovely of spring days; & he walked on slowly, recovering his soul. What a world! The hedges were still white with fruit-trees in flower and the ground was wild with celandine, wood anemone, violets, some primroses. He came about eighteen miles; for he always thought in that measure and decimally; and was overlooking one of the courses of the young Thames, as he secretly called it: the Windrush and Swinbrook.[123] It affected him as the natural scene did under that sort of restorative fatigue.

He moved along the top edge of the valley, gently rocked in his spirit

by the circumstances: the light, the loneliness; when it struck him that something was going a bit too far. He thought he would sit down, or perhaps lie down. He had sometimes foolish apprehension about his heart.

He heard a long musical note, which made him think he was ill. He had the illusion of false memory, and seemed to be predicting the sounds which duly reached him. He felt someone was handling him. He or another said:

I am afraid he is dead.

Another voice said:

No, ma'am, he's not dead; I think he's been knocked down.

Quick, Jenny: where's my bag?

Something was poured in his mouth.

Do you feel better, sir?

Melius habeo,[124] he replied. He opened terrified eyes to see two ladies, one kneeling; and shut them again.

He was strongly raised to his feet and made to walk.

It's no good, said the man; who lifted him by main force and set him down.

Vernon, where's the nearest hospital?

Ciren.

Cizzeter, she corrected, having a mania of her own.[125]

Step out; but for heaven sake, take care.

The rhythm as they rolled along did Park good, & the musical note seemed pleasant. He smiled as he saw the kind faces of the ladies, sitting uncomfortably; & wanted to make a change.

No, stay where you are. Which way were you going?

I don't know.

Arrived at the town she spoke through the tube:

Drive right on.

I am taking you to a hospital; they are very nice.

Thank you. And he gave up again.

More lugging and carrying and another seat. Someone felt his pulse. He tried violently to be himself.

I am sure you will be all right.

A thousand thanks. There was a prick in his arm.

Keep still. You're all right. And he was alone.

What's your name, sir?

Dr Park.

What's your address? He named his college.

Well, I'll tell you what it is. You've no pain?

None.

I could telephone for the doctor: but I am sure there is nothing wrong with you. It's a very warm day, and you have taken a faint. If you like I could telephone to Mrs Jones for a room.

Pardon me, Sister, what place is this?

Malmesbury.[126]

Is it really? But I am staying with Mrs Poole.

Then you're all right. Of course, it's Dr Park. How long have you been down?

About a fortnight.

Isn't it nice weather?

I am as right as rain. Well, good-bye; so sorry.

HULLOA, Dr Park, we thought you were coming back by the Fairford bus. Had you a nice walk? It's not too late for tea: it's only a quarter past five. Irene!

16th August, 1929

Dear Dr Park,

I do not think there is anything significant in what you tell me. Walk a lot: but I should not exceed twenty-five miles at one time if I could help it.

If, when you come in, you feel fatigue or are wet, take as usual five grains of each. If you felt inclined you could go back to your tablets for a few days.

I hope you have a good holiday.

Yours ever,

M. B., B. Sc.

LATER, the writer of this letter heard a reasoned abbreviation of the foregoing narrative, and commented it from his special point of view.

You were asleep, said he; it was not a faint. It was a short, deep sleep; and what you experienced was a waking state.

A short sleep, said Park.

But sleep is sleep, long or short.

And a long dream.

Somewhat more elaborate than is usual.

Notes to the Prose

Les Goncourt

1 *The Nineteenth Century*, a monthly review founded in 1877, had a reputation for impartiality, publishing conflicting views on the issues of the day. Among its eminent contributors were Gladstone, T. H. Huxley, Ruskin, Webb and Wilde.

2 Jean-François Millet (1814–1875), French painter, a member of the Barbizon school whose painting, *Angelus*, was something of a cliché even in 1889.

3 Probably George John Douglas (1823–1900), 8th Duke of Argyll, whose status as a "thinker" led him to be nominated for a proposed British Academy of Letters. (Cf. *The Letters of Oscar Wilde*, Rupert Hart-Davis, ed. [London: Rupert Hart-Davis, 1963], p. 692, n.2).

4 The Goncourts' first novel, *En 18..*, was published on 2 December 1851, the day Louis-Napoleon Bonaparte, who had been elected President of the Second Republic in December 1848, dissolved the National Assembly and proclaimed himself Napoleon III, Emperor of the French.

5 "Henriette Maréchel" was first produced by the Théâtre-Français on 5 December 1865.

6 These artists (one of whom was Millet) settled in the village of Barbizon, near Paris, to paint landscapes and rural life directly, some even working in the open air rather than the studio. Their techniques later led to the realist and impressionist modes of painting—and (as Gray suggests here) to the post-impressionist techniques of Gauguin.

7 The Goupil gallery in Paris, which was one of the first to show the new *avant-garde* painters such as Van Gogh, Gauguin and the Impressionists.

8 *La Faustin* (1881), *La Fille Élisa* (1877) and *Chérie* (1884) were all written by Edmond de Goncourt.

The Person in Question

1 The "season" in Victorian London, set by the social calendar, opened in May and closed at the end of July.

2 Ten shillings and a penny, old money; about fifty English pence in the new.

3 (Fr.) "A piece well baked."

4 (Fr.) "A Lyons sausage, . . . some tong" (variant spelling for "tongue").

5 Bismark was Head Waiter at the Café Royal. Gray's friend, Pierre Louÿs, sent some money to him through Gray to thank him for services rendered during his stay in London. (Gray to Louÿs, 1 August 1892.)

6 Either the fruit of the *cucurbita ovifera*, the aubergine or eggplant, or the fruit of the avocado or the marrow-fat pea.

7 Gray learned Dutch in 1891/92 in order to translate a novel by the Dutch writer, Louis Couperus, which appeared under the title *Ecstasy* in 1892.

8 (L.) "point by point."

9 A large social gathering, especially if crowded; in contrast to the dinner party which was still the social norm in late Victorian London. Cf. H. D. Traill, in *Tea Without Toast* (1890): "And we settled that to give a crush at nine/ Would be greatly more effectual, and far more intellectual,/ Than at six o'clock to, greatly daring, dine."

10 A fashionable luxury hotel in Brighton, on the south coast of England, about sixty miles from London.

11 The Jewish section of East London.

12 The park is Hyde Park, where the fashionable went to ride, either in their carriages or on horseback, or to promenade. Hurlingham is the Hurlingham Club (founded in 1869) in the Ranelagh Gardens, known as the home of croquet. Covent Garden Royal Opera House is still the venue for opera in London.

13 One of the many trade exhibitions on show in London which featured entertainments such as the switchback (see the following note, no. 14).

14 An amusement railroad with steep rises and descents.

15 (Fr.) A cheap perfume favoured by prostitutes.

The Modern Actor

1 Leonardo da Vinci, a native of Florence, died at the Chateau of Cloux, just outside the walls of the town of Amboise in France, while in the service of King Francis I. He is buried within the Church of St. Florentin at Amboise.

2 Piero della Francesca (c. 1420–1492), Italian painter of the early Renaissance.

3 Gray here equates Dante's poetic inferno with his exile from Florence to which, after 1302, he never returned. A wanderer sheltered by various Italian cities and princely rulers, he made his final home in Ravenna, where he died in 1321.

4 François Villon, the pseudonym of François de Montcorbier or François des Loges (1431–after 1463), one of France's greatest lyric poets, lived a life of criminal excess, spending much time in prison or in banishment from his native Paris. He disappeared after 1463, after a death sentence was commuted to ten years' exile. Gray is here subscribing to the romantic notion of Villon as an "accursed poet"—to use the phrase of Arthur Rimbaud whose work Gray was at the time translating.

5 Gray here seems to be referring to the founding of Methodism by John and Charles Wesley in 1729. In common with most Evangelical sects of its time, Methodism disapproved of such secular pleasures as dancing, playing cards and the theatre. A practical result of "the asceticism of the Seventeenth Century" was the closing down of the theatres by Parliament in 1642.

6 A popular music hall song of the period.

7 Kit Marlowe was the nickname used by Gray and his circle for the Elizabethan playwright Christopher Marlowe (1564–1593), who was killed in a tavern brawl under mysterious circumstances. Will Hughes is the fictional protagonist of Wilde's "The Portrait of Mr. W. H." (1889), whom Wilde proposes as the beloved youth of Shakespeare's sonnets.

8 In French, "bohème" has been applied to gipsies since the fifteenth century, as they were thought to come from Bohemia. Following the success of Henry Muger's *Scenes de la vie de Bohème* (1848), the word became identified with the romance of Paris student life, particularly that of poor artists and the quarter in which they lived. It came into current use in England around 1861. Gray here laments the clearance of such areas for the vast building enterprises which destroyed much of Georgian London.

9 Gray is referring to the practice in the Victorian theatre of producing heavily edited versions of Elizabethan and Jacobean drama, reducing them to a series of sensational "scenes."

10 The famous cloth merchant, still trading in London.

11 *Robert Elsemere* (1888) was one of the most famous novels by Mary Augusta (better known as Mrs. Humphry) Ward. It articulated her view that Christianity could be revitalized by emphasizing its social mission. Victorian earnestness, which Gray here summarizes as "Germanism" (Arnold's "Hebraism") is exemplified in its love of the *tendenzroman*, or novel with heavily underlined moral message.

12 Actors or stage-players (1889); usually contemptuous.

13 Henry Irving (the stage name of John Henry Brodribb, 1838–1905) was a hugely successful actor of the day and, from 1878 onwards, manager of the Lyceum Theatre, where Ellen Terry was his leading lady. Gray's particular devotion, however, was to the great French actress, Sarah Bernhardt (1844–1923), whom he saw on stage in London during summer of 1892, a few months after he delivered this lecture.

The Advantages of Civilization

1 Among this improbable list of honours is membership is the Helsingfors guild (Helsingfors is the Swedish name for Helsinki, capital of present-day Finland) and the order of the iron cross of Patagonia. The awarding of such decorations grew out of the medieval custom or conferring knighthood, and in Gray's time such orders as these still provided occasion for snobbery. Patagonia is a barren region between the Andes and the Atlantic covering territory in both southern Chile and southern Peru.

2 Fiji, a Melanesian island group in the South Pacific, was proclaimed a British Crown Colony in 1874. Most present-day Fijians are, like Zaccheus Bishop, Methodist.

3 Mass conversions to Christianity were the norm in British colonies such as Fiji and India. Once the chieftain or village head was persuaded, all the other men in the village and their families threw in their lot with him and were deemed converted.

4 Bishop's savage name was "Up-four-trees"; this is wittily translated as Zaccheus, after a rich publican who climbed a sycamore tree so that he could have a better view of Jesus (Luke 19: 1–4). The same kind of equivalence is sought in translating the aboriginal title of chief into "Bishop."

5 The Methodist emphasis on social reform, which produced the New Methodist Missionary Society, is also reflected in these organizations: an orphanage, a club for working-class boys and an organization which worked with prostitutes (under the euphemism of "National Purity").

6 (Fr.) livliness, briskness.

7 The names of two wifes of Roman emperors; the elder (c. 104–141) was married to Antonius Pius; the younger (c. 125–176) to Marcus Aurelius (cf. below, note 8).

8 Marcus Aurelius, surnamed Antoninus, originally Marcus Annius Verus (121–180) was Roman Emperor from 161–180. An eminent Stoic philosopher, he was author of the *Meditations*.

9 Caracalla (Marcus Aurelius Antoninus) was Roman Emperor from 211–217; Hadrian (Publius Aelius Hadrianus) Roman Emperor from 117–138; Antinous was a Roman courtier (c. 110–130) and Caligula (originally Gaius Caesar) was Roman Emperor from 37–41.

10 (L.) Apollo the Cithara Player. The statue, from the Temple of Apollo at Cyrene, is Roman, of the Imperial period, and probably a copy of a Greek bronze from c. 2 B.C. It may still be found at the British Museum (sculpture #1380).

11 (G.) The Royal Museum in Dresden (Germany).

12 The Elgin marbles are ancient sculptures and architectural fragments (composed chiefly the frieze and pediment of the Parthenon) collected by the Earl of Elgin. Transported from Athens to London, they were placed in the British Museum in 1816 where they remain today.

The Yellow Princess

1 Pietro Mascagni (1863–1945) was an Italian composer of such fashionable operas as *Cavalleria* (1890).

2 An aigrette is an ornamental spray of feathers (usually egret); *ecaille blonde* is French for a white or silvery shell.

Their Mothers

1 (F.) "not bad".

The Redemption of Durtal

1 in these two books under review, *Là–Bas* (1891) and *En Route* (1895).

2 Lydwine de Schiedam (1380–1433), Flemish mystic.

3 i.e.; to this period of time.

4 Maréchal Gilles de Rais (1404–1440) was a French soldier who fought with Joan of Arc and was later created marshal of France (1429). A patron of the arts, he was later hanged for the murder of over 140 children.

5 (Fr.) literally, a "touching by God."

6 Dionysius the Areopagite, an unknown author (c. 500) whose works of mystical and speculative theology exercised vast influence on medieval thought.

7 Peter Faber (1506–1546) was a French Jesuit theologian and tutor of Ignatius Loyola.

8 Durtal's spiritual mentor throughout these conversion novels.

9 The Trappistes (fr. for Trappists) are Roman Catholic monks, officially the reformed Cistercians or Cistercians of the Stricter Observance. They perpetuate the reform began at La Trappe monastery in France, which entails a life of strict silence and seclusion from the world.

10 (L.) "the class 'writer' ".

11 (Fr.) "author".

12 (Fr.) "the vaseline of his delivery" (i.e.; the facility of his speech).

13 Dr. Tauler was Johannes Tauler (c. 1300–1361), German mystic and preacher; Suso was Heinrich Suso (c. 1295–1366), a German mystic and Dominican. One of "the two Eckharts" was Johannes, called Meister Eckhart (c. 1260–?1327), a German mystic and Dominican who is considered the founding spirit of German idealism, Romanticism and Protestantism. The other mystic by the name of Eckhart is unknown. Catherine Emmerich (Anna Katharina Emmerich), called the Nun of Dulmen (1774–1824), was a German religious and visionary.

14 Die Brüder des freien Geistes (The Brothers and Sisters of the Free Spirit) were a lay sect which flourished during the 13th century in parts of Germany, the Low Countries, Switzerland and Italy. Their teaching, heretical and mystical, stemmed from a crude pantheism which led them to reject moral restraint of all kinds.

15 (G.) "The Friend of God from Oberland" was a legendary figure of pious reputation credited with the conversion of the mystic Johannes Tauler (see note 13, directly above).

16 Clemens Brentano (1778–1842) was a German dramatist, novelist and poet who became a fervid Roman Catholic (1818) and withdrew to the monastery of Dulmen to be near Catherine Emmerich (see note 13, directly above).

17 (Fr.) "It was mild that morning; the sun was filtering through the moving sieve of the leaves; and the day, thus sifted, changed by the contact with the white, to rose. Durtal, who was getting ready to read his prayer-book, saw the pages

become pink, and by the law of complimentaries, all the letters, printed in black ink, took on a green hue."

18 (Fr.) "It was pitch black; at the level of the first story, a round window open in the wall of the church pierced the shadows with a red moon.

Durtal took a few puffs of a cigarette, then walked towards the chapel. He softly turned the latch of the door; the hall where he entered was dark but the rotunda, although empty, was illuminated with many lights.

He took a step, crossed himself and stepped backwards, as he had just touched a body; he looked at his feet.

He was entering a field of battle.

On the ground, human forms were lying in the attitudes of fighters mowed down by machine guns; some flat face downward, others on their knees; some here collapsing unto the ground as if struck in the back, others there stretched fingers taut on their chests, others still holding their heads or stretching out their arms.

And, of this group of the dying, there arose not one groan, not one complaint."

19 (Fr.) "Mysticism is a science absolutely precise."

20 All words that describe supernatural possession of the human psyche.

21 (Fr.) "all his advice reduces itself to this: stew in your own juice and wait".

22 Durtal's "vulgarity" is reflected in the cheap pun on the mass in the following passage, when he speaks of ". . . those masses of cheap eating houses like the many cooked up in Paris . . . they will pour out for me big bowls of holy veal soup! . . . Their cantors will churn a margarine of truly rancid sounds."

23 Possibly the Primitive Methodist Church.

24 (Fr.) "Saint Bonaventura condenses in a sort of *meat* the ways of meditating on (Holy) Communion." Saint Bonaventura (c. 1217–1274) was an Italian scholastic philosopher.

25 (L.) "It already stinks"; i.e., it is not only dead, but decomposing. The phrase is from John 11:39, the story of the raising of Lazarus; his sister is objecting to Jesus' command to remove the stone at the mouth of the grave, as Lazarus has already been dead four days. In this context, Gray is using the phrase not simply to indicate disgust, but also hope for the spiritual resurrection of Durtal.

Niggard Truth

1 George Whitefield (1714–1770) was an English evangelist who succeeded John and Charles Wesley as the leader of the Methodists in Oxford, and after a later split with the Wesleys, becoming the leader of the Calvinists in 1741. Harriet's "new Protestantism" was probably of this sect.

2 A joke: the "cult" of which this figure was the "Pope" is that of the god of wine, Dionysus, of which Denys is the shortened form.

3 Silenus, like Dionysus, is, in Greek mythology, a god of wine and fertility. Gambrinus is a mythical Flemish king, to whom is attributed the invention of beer.

4 A long woolen scarf worn around the throat.

5 (Fr.) In ecclesiastical circles, the Dean.

6 Hugh Bourne (1772–1852) was an English preacher and founder of the first society of the Primitive Methodists in 1810. George Fox (1624–91) was the founder of the Society of Friends. William Law (1686–1761) is chiefly remembered for his treatises on practical morality, particularly his "Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life" (1729) of which Wesley said it sowed the seed of Methodism. In later life, Law's writing assumed a mystical character.

7 In the Hindu cult of the Juggernaut (or Jagannath) in India, images of the avatar Krishna are mounted on enormous carts and dragged in an annual procession by thousands of pilgrims. It was commonly believed that pilgrims hurled themselves to their deaths beneath the wheels of the carts.

Light

1 John Martin (1789–1854), English painter and mezzotint engraver, was celebrated for his melodramatic scenes of cataclysmic events crowded with tiny figures, such as his "Joshua Commanding the Sun to Stand Still" (in the United Grand Lodge of Great Britain, London).

2 Parsees are a religious community (largely in India) which practices Zoroastrianism. Tierra del Fuegians live in an archipelago off the coast of South America, south of the Straits of Magellan. Buddist monks follow the system of philosophy and ethics which arose out of the teachings of the Buddha in India in the 6th and 5th centuries B.C.

3 that is, a Doctor of Theology, not a medical doctor.

4 These lines apparently are taken from the poem ("Lord if thou are not present. . .") described in the story as the poem which "had first arrested her eye." Gray translated part of this poem for *Spiritual Poems*, but no drafts exist of the whole of the poem and none which contain the fragment quoted here.

5 These three places in the West End of London are all within easy walking distance. The heroine has gotten off the train at Charing Cross station, near Trafalgar Square, and walked through Leicester Square to Picadilly Circus, in the late nineteenth century, the junction of five important streets.

6 One of several music halls near Leicester Square, the Alhambra Theatre was distinguished by its mock-Moorish facade.

7 A fictitious title, one probably Gray himself considered for his *Spiritual Poems*, the contents of which closely resemble that of the book purchased by the heroine (even to the point of using Gray's own translations).

8 Ten shillings and six pence, about 55 new pence in English money.

9 Gray's paraphrase of a passage from Anselm, taken from *Spiritual Poems*.

10 The sonnet, by Andreas Gryphius (1616–64), is quoted in Gray's own translation for *Spiritual Poems*.

11 Jacopone da Todi, originally Jacopo dei Benedetti (c. 1230–1306), an Italian religious and poet.

12 Gray's translation of Jacopone da Todi's poem, which is a variant of that published a year previously, in *Spiritual Poems*. The important variations are listed in Fletcher, *Poems of John Gray*, p. 317. Excerpts from the poem are quoted throughout the remainder of the story.

13 The Greek name for the destroying angel (Rev. 9:11).

14 Saint Francis of Assisi (1181/82–1226), Italian friar and mystic, founder of the Franciscan order, who, in Jacopone's poem, rebukes Christ for advocating temperance in love.

15 Johann or Johannes Scheffler (1624–1677) wrote under the pseudonym of Angelus Silesius. A Polish mystic, polemicist and poet, Scheffler was a Catholic priest, physician and spokesman for the Counter-Reformation.

16 Friedrich Spe or Spee (1591–1635), German poet and moral theologian; a Jesuit by vocation.

17 Richard Crashaw (1613?–1649), English poet, author of "An Himme for the Circumcision day of our Lord."

Aubrey Beardsley

1 Catullus was Gaius Valerius (c. 84–c. 54 B.C.), a Roman poet who flourished during the time of Augustus (Gaius Julius Caesar, also known as Octavian) who was to become the first Roman Emperor and to give his name to the period. The full line of Catullus's poem reads: "*Atque in perpetuum, frater, ave atque vale.*" (And so, my brother, hail, and farewell, evermore!) From *Carmina* ci, translated William Morris).

2 Gray dates Beardsley's "flowering" from the time he decided to devote himself completely to his drawing, in 1891. The phrase, "in an instant," from the following sentence is an exaggeration typical of Gray: the "Beardsley Boom" did not occur until another two to three years later, in 1893/94.

3 Beardsley worked on the notorious *Yellow Book* as Art Editor and illustrator from 1894 until his dismissal in the spring of 1895. *The Savoy* was intended by its editor, Arthur Symons, to continue the work of *The Yellow Book* in presenting the best of the new art and literature and for this reason he asked Beardsley to again be Art Editor at its inception in 1896.

4 *A Book of Fifty Drawings by Aubrey Beardsley*, with an iconography by Aymer Vallance, published by Leonard Smithers, London 1897.

5 Wilhelm Bousset (1865–1920), a German scholar and theologian.

6 Saint Alphonso de Liguori (1696–1787) was an Italian priest and founder of the Redemptorist Order.

God–made and Machine–made

1 Shusan (also Shushan and Susa), known for its great palace, was the ancient capital of Elam and administrative of King Darius I and his successors from 522 B.C. The phrase "Shushan the palace" is from the Book of Esther which takes place there. The original "war prisoners" were the Jews (although the "two miles an hour" would have been Gray's own extrapolation).

2 (Fr.) literally, "who that you are"; i.e., that which you now are.

3 A device consisting of a short movable scale, by which more minute measurements may be readily obtained from the divisions of the graduated scale of surveying or other such instruments.

4 The Camaldolese are members of the religious order founded by St. Romvuald at Camaldoli in the 11th century. P. P. Mackey was Paul Peter Mackey, O.P., one of the Dominicans assigned by Pope Leo XIII in 1894 to undertake a critical edition of the complete works of St. Thomas Acquinas.

5 One of the canonical hours of the breviary, properly recited at midnight but occasionally at daybreak.

6 (Fr) amenities, agreeable things.

7 (L.) with appropriate alteration of details.

8 St. Gertrude (1256–1311) was a German mystic. Gray was at the time translating her work, to be published as *O Beata Trinitas. The Prayers of St Gertrude and St Mechilde* (London: Sheed & Ward, 1927).

9 Penelope was the wife of Odysseus who, while waiting his return, occupied herself with weaving. To fool her husband's rivals, who were also suitors for her hand, she promised to accept one of them when the piece of tapestry was done, but every evening unravelled the work of the day (so that it "regressed").

10 The Faroes are islands in the North Atlantic Ocean between Iceland and the Shetlands.

11 Rheims is a city in northeast France, known for its medieval cathedral.

12 Staffordshire, a county in central England, is known for its manufacture of chinaware. The declension of its quality is mirrored by Gray in the declension of his English ("badder and badderer").

13 The *New English Dictionary*, now the *Oxford English Dictionary* (see note 5, under "Dialogue").

14 (L.) "Who but God": a favourite motto of Gray's.

15 (L.) "Let it pass."

16 Gray's Skye terrier was named Toby, for which there is "historical precedent" in popular culture, particularly in the "Dog Toby" of the Punch and Judy

shows. The dog's name originally derives from that of his owner, Tobias, whose story is told in the Apocryphal "Book of Tobit."

17 Gray was born in the year 1866 and ordained a priest in 1901.

18 Cleaver and Tucker were soap manufacturers. Pope Pius XI was Pope from 1903–1914. Gray is thus furthering the tradition of keeping "a bit astern" in the chronology of the soap's cameo.

19 King of England and Emperor of India from 1910–1936.

20 Thing and Thingamee; also thingummy, thingamajig: mindless expression for all those things too complex to name; the verbal equivalent of "all that stuff."

Winter Walking

1 (rare): to winter over; thus, to hibernate.

2 A map by the Scottish cartographer, John George Bartholomew (1860–1920).

3 A special case used by botanists for carrying newly-collected specimens. (Gray was a keen amateur botanist.)

4 (Ital.) How beautiful!

5 A "loan" is Scottish dialect for a lane or by-way. Mr. Asquith was Herbert Henry Asquith, First Earl of Oxford and Asquith (1852–1928), who owned lands in Scotland.

6 (Fr.) Literally, "hall of the lost footsteps"; used to designate the outer hall of a court of law.

7 God punished Cain for killing his brother Abel by making him a fugitive (Genesis 4:12).

8 In the manner of Victor-Marie Hugo (1802–1885), the famous French writer.

9 (L.) country and city.

Man's Visible Works

1 (Fr.) "Do you regret the time when heaven walked on earth and breathed through a people of [who were themselves] gods?"

2 (L.) notwithstanding.

3 (L.) under the open sky.

4 A prayer of the Roman Catholic Church, recited usually three times daily as announced by a bell, traditionally at six a.m., noon and six p.m. The distinctive order of ringing the bell is three times, three times, nine times.

5 (L.) Hope! (A favourite mottto of Gray's.)

6 From "Ode to a Nightingale" by John Keats.

7 "And drowsy tinklings lull the distant folds." from "Elegy in a Country Churchyard" by Thomas Gray.

8 (L.) from which.

9 From the name of the Greek god Atlas, who was supposed to hold up the pillars of the universe.

10 Chipping Campden, a village in the Cotswolds, familiar to Gray from his annual holidays.

11 (Fr.) "It is necessary to be of one's time."

12 (Fr.) Literally, "the Disappearance of the Rhone (among the marvels of France)." Gray is referring to the point at which the Rhone river disappears underground, reappearing some miles downriver, geologically not uncommon where rivers cross limestone soil. In modern times, the building of a dam at Genissat has caused the "Perte du Rhone" itself to disappear.

In the following sentences, Gray is referring to the switchback railroad, which (at 250,000 h.p.) "uplifts" people up the gorge at the Perte du Rhone, giving them a view of the Grand Credo (variant of Grand Credoz, a mountain near Geneva in the Jura range). Longeray is a village near the gorge.

13 Gray is here referring to two peaks, the Reculet and the Crêt de la Neige, the two highest points of the Jura mountain range, which extends for 225 miles on both sides of the French/Swiss border from the Rhone River to the Rhine.

14 The Welland is a river in Northhamptonshire in central England, the valley of which extends through Rockingham to Gretton. From Gretton one can see Rutland, or Rutlandshire, another inland county.

Hymns: A Suppressed Preface

1 (L.) "and in speaking by hymns".

2 *Analecta hymnica medii aevi* vol. 1–55, Clemens Blume and Guido M. Dreves, eds. (Leipzig: O. R. Reisland, 1886–1922).

3 All poets in English: John Dryden (1631–1700); Richard Crashaw (note 17 under "Light"); Robert Southwell (1561–1595), poet and Jesuit martyr; Covertry Patmore (1823-1896), who was associated with the Pre-Raphaelites; Michael Field, the pen name of Katherine Bradley (1846–1914) and her niece, Edith Cooper (1862–1913), both friends of Gray; Lionel Johnson (1867–1902), a friend of Gray in the nineties and fellow frequenter of the Rhymers' Club; and Gerard Manley Hopkins (1844–1889), poet and Jesuit priest.

4 *Saint Peter's Hymns*—as well as a reprint of this essay, under the title *On Hymn Writing*—was hand-printed by Philip Saintsbury in limited editions at the Cayme Press, Kensington, London in 1925. Both editions boast heavily decorative borders and large ornaments. The "meagre collection" of the first book consisted of 24 hymns.

5 John Wesley (1703–1791), the founder of Methodism and his brother, Charles Wesley (1707–1788) were both hymn writers, although Charles was by far the more prolific and famous. The Wesleys were barred from most pulpits because of their evangelical methods, which included vivid preaching and spirited singing of hymns, practices which aimed to make religion a vital personal experience. In using the term "Enthusiasts," Gray alludes both to the unorthodox practices of the Methodists as well as its emphasis on direct inspiration from God.

6 The Olney hymns (1799) were written by the English poet William Cowper (1731–1800), referred to below as the "poet fond of hares," and the evangelical curate John Newton (1725–1807). Newton had previously spent ten years in the African slave trade. Olney, in central England, near Northampton, is the "village more famous for its squalor than for anything else historically."

7 (Ital.) A student at the Scots' College, Rome, where Gray attended from 1898 until his ordination in 1901.

8 "to work hard and steadily" (colloquial from 1888).

9 William Wordsworth, his sister Dorothy and his wife, Mary Hutchinson Wordsworth, were known to compose poems together around the breakfast table.

10 The bass stop to the organ; referring to the flaws of Tennyson's more florid poetic mannerisms.

11 (L.) "In the sight of the unwise they seemed to die, . . . but they are in peace." From the Wisdom of Solomon (a book of the Apocrypha) 3: 2–3.

Excursion

1 Innerleithen is a town south of Edinburgh. The day trip described by Gray takes him from here south again to Yarrowdale and then west to St. Mary's Loch.

2 The Scottish river that passes through Innerleithen. The Tweed is here said to be "a Scotch river which has already acquired an 'English accent' " as it is a river which flows from Scotland toward England, actually defining the national border on its eastern stretch from Coldstream to a point several miles from its outlet into the North Sea.

3 Traquair House.

4 The Moorfoot Hills, north of Innerleithen.

5 The excursion is into what is known as the "border country," the hilly upland area which reaches down to and includes the border of Scotland with England.

6 Scots dialect for brook or stream.

7 "As the hart panteth after the fountains, so panteth my soul after thee, O God." Psalm 42:1.

8 There are seven rivers in this *département* of southwestern France, which derives its names to the largest, the Dordogne.

9 The Thames, the principal river of England, rises in the Cotswolds of Gloustershire. Gray is "personally aggrieved at the vile treatment it receives"; in his time, the lower reaches were virtually an open sewer—a situation now largely rectified.

10 (L.) "without stain".

11 Scots dialect for lake.

12 Scots dialect for the steep bank of a river or lake.

13 From the Latin, "dis aliter visum": "to the gods it appeared otherwise" (Virgil, *Aeneid* II: 428).

14 A memorial to the Scottish poet, James Hogg (1770–1835). Known as "the Ettrick Shepherd," Hogg was born, raised and lived as a shepherd and farmer in this district.

15 Samuel Johnson, known as Dr. Johnson (1709–1784). Why Gray thought Johnson was "shameful" is not clear, unless he is contrasting Johnson's temperament (as "full of shame" or self-loathing) with the exuberant personality of Hogg. Lichfield, the municipal borough of Staffordshire, England, was the birthplace of Samuel Johnson.

16 Gray is here (uncharacteristically) incorrect. The line is the final one of Hogg's own work, "The Queen's Wake," according to S. H. Groome, *The Ordinance Gazetter of Scotland* (1885).

17 "Tibbie Shiels" is a famous pub named after its original owner (once a "body"—or person, in Scots dialect.)

18 Robert Burns, Tibbie Shiels's best–known customer, who in turn made her pub famous.

19 (L.) "the nature of things".

20 "Law" is Scots dialect for a (more or less conical) hill.

Trespassers Will Be Prosecuted

1 (L.) "beggings of the question"

2 A stream that flows through the counties of Somerset and Devonshire in England.

3 Two villages located near Gray's "holiday ground" of the Cotswolds.

4 In law, a notice indicating long established rights of access to light, usually posted near sites of demolition and/or building as a warning against infringement.

5 Usually spelled "Cairn Toul," this is a mountain located in Grampian in Scotland.

6 The poet Richard Crashaw (1613?–1649) was expelled from fellowship at Peterhouse College, Cambridge, for his refusal to accept the Solemn Leave and

Covenant which provided for the establishment of a Presbyterian state church in England and Ireland in 1643. He later embraced Roman Catholicism.

7 (Fr.) "in turn".

8 In the Low Countries, a periodical (probably annual) fair or carnival, characterized by much noisy merrymaking.

9 A lively dance of the Scottish Highlands.

10 A Moslem friar who whipped himself into an ecstatic trance by means of a characteristic whirling dance.

11 A priest of the Greek goddess Cybele, fertility goddess and Mother of the gods, who was worshipped with noisy and extravagant dances.

12 In Greek myth, one of the judges in the lower world; and so, a figure of justice and right judgement.

13 Pembroke College, Cambridge.

14 i.e., Richard Crashaw (see note 6, under "Light").

15 An inn located in Cambridge.

16 (Ital.) "with vivacity".

Dialogue

1 (Fr.) "My first is a precious metal;/ My second is a dweller of the sky;/ My all is a delicious fruit."

2 Initials of the *New English Dictionary* (see Headnote to "Dialogue").

3 Sir Frank Brangwyn (1867–1956), a British painter and decorator, known for his richness of colour and bravura technique. Gray commissioned a painting from Brangwyn for the sanctuary of St. Peter's, Edinburgh.

4 Saint Augustine, known as Saint Augustine of Hippo (354–430), an Early Christian father and philosopher.

5 Sir James Augustus Henry Murray (1837–1915), a British lexicographer, helped plan and edit the Philological Society's *New English Dictionary* (from 1879), now known as the *Oxford English Dictionary*.

6 In modern use: that branch of applied mathematics which determines the figures and areas of large portions of the earth's surface, and the figure of the earth as a whole.

7 Samuel Johnson, known as Dr. Johnson (1709–84), English writer, lexicographer and critic.

8 James Boswell (1740–1795), Scottish lawyer and biographer of Samuel Johnson.

9 "To inspissate" is to thicken or condense; "a pomatum" is a pomade or scented ointment for application to the skin.

10 Maximilien-François-Marie-Isidore de Robespierre (1758–1794), the French revolutionary largely responsible for the Reign of Terror (1793–94).

11 The Duplays were the family with which Robespierre lodged on the rue Saint–Honoré from 1791 onwards.

12 (G.) "orange".

13 Thomas Wolsey (c. 1475–1530), English prelate and statesman.

14 John Fletcher (1579–1625), the English dramatist.

15 (F.) "It is not a beast."

16 (G.) "In the dark foliage the gold oranges glow. . . ." from Goethe's *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre* (1795–96), III:i (trans. Carlyle).

17 Versailles was the huge palace built in the city of Versailles, northern France by Louis XIV (work begun in 1661; Louis moved his court there in 1682). Famed as much for its great cost as for its sumptuousness, the palace boasted a large grove of orange trees, reputedly planted to counteract the nasty smells of the court.

18 From Charles Dickens's *Martin Chuzzlewit* (1843–44). While on business in London, Mr. Pecksniff and his daughters Mercy and Charity, lodge at Todger's Commercial Boarding House, which was located near a local fruit-market. Consequently, "one of the first impressions wrought upon the stranger's senses was of oranges—of damaged oranges, with blue and green bruises on them, festering in boxes, or mouldering away in cellars" (Chapter Nine).

19 (L.) "corruption of the best." Gray is citing part of a famous tag, "Corruptio optimi pessima," "the worst thing is the corruption of the best," a phrase made famous by the well-known British historian of the period, Lord Acton.

20 The line cited above, note 16, which is by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749–1832).

21 Tennyson's sources for "The Hesperides," the poem from which this line derives, may well have included Theophrastus (c. 327–c.287 B.C.), the Greek philosopher and natural scientist (although his most recent editor, Christopher Ricks, includes no such sources in his notes for *The Poems of Tennyson*).

Perhaps it is appropriate to a verbal "dialogue" that the speaker slightly misquotes the lines, which should read: "The luscious fruitage clustereth mellowly,/ Goldenkernelled, goldencored,/ Sunset–ripened above on the tree." As the speaker correctly claims, the poem was suppressed by Tennyson after its first printing in 1832 in response to the harsh criticism it received.

22 Perhaps "Goblin Market" by Christina Rossetti (1830–94), in which fruit, including oranges, plays a major role.

23 Wright was an acquaintance of Gray's: Dominican rector? check lists.

Park: a fantastic story

1 Park is walking towards Oxford, the county seat of Oxfordshire and home

of the famous university. This locates him within his "holiday ground" of the Cotswolds, where he walked for two or three weeks every summer.

2 A monument to Lucius Cary, second Viscount Falkland (1610–1643), a famous royalist, a man known for his learning and accomplishment, and the centre of a circle which included Ben Jonson and Sir John Suckling. Falkland wrote verses and theological works.

The inscription is from Psalm 122:7; the line reads in full: "Peace be within thy walls, and plenteousness within thy palaces."

3 (L.) "Thanks be to God," said he, automatically. "I may have hurt you gravely" said the voice. Mungo Park sprang to a sitting posture with astonishment, relief, dignity, indignation.

"You have hurt me?"

"And none other."

"Why?"

"Didn't you hear the pipe?"

"The pipe? What is that?"

Unless otherwise noted, all further translations are from the Latin. Gray uses a medieval (church) Latin, not the classical, and therefore some of the constructions may seem odd and are difficult to translate.

4 "There's nothing to be afraid of," said the man with a slight accent of reproof.

"Come."

"I am not able to walk."

"Come along. Come."

5 "Speak in Latin."

"I have spoken a mystery; and I repeat it."

"How do you know Latin?"

"It is a sacred language."

6 "There is nothing to fear," the black repeated. . . .

"Summoned."

7 "I am here," said he, stupidly.

"Good; would you mind." He sat down. Followed unintelligible words.

"Have you understood?"

"Not at all."

"Who are you?"

"Kentigern Park the Scot."

"Would you mind calling the attendant." (?)

"Kentigern" is the Latin for "Mungo," a Scottish saint (see note 65 below), and to emphasize the fact, he adds "Scoticus," "Scottish" in Latin. Gray's own passionate identification with Scotland led him when talking to Englishmen to refer to England as "your country."

8 The language of the Wapami, invented by Gray.

9 "Tell me, John. . . ."

"It is not permitted."

"However, say. . . ."

10 "There is nothing to fear. . . ."

"Called." . . .

"Are you here?"

"I am here."

"The Very Reverend Bishop Thomas, S.T.D., of the Villa Gracili is about to speak from the depths of his Grandeur as vicar-general of the Diocese Kottatil. Are you prepared? Have you understood?"

"Yes."

The initials S.T.D. stand for "Doctor of Sacred Theology."

11 "Greetings, Honoured Guest, may all your plans prosper, and forever."

12 "Take care, take great care."

13 "Bear this in mind. Farewell."

14 "The blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, descend on you and remain with you forever," said the priest; and he knelt erect.

Amen.

"Summoned."

15 David Jones (1895–1974), poet and artist. In 1921 he became a Roman Catholic and in 1922 began a long association with Eric Gill. It is probably through Gill that Gray knew Jones and his work.

16 Saltpetre, a strong oxidizer, is used in making gunpowder, with which Park's leg was "peppered."

17 A case in which a collection of dried plants is systematically arranged.

18 "Bless!"

19 Park is recalling the instructions for robing priests under the "old law" of Judaism, such as those of Exodus 39.

20 A long strip of cloth wound spirally around the leg from the ankle to the knee, worn as protection and support to the leg.

21 (L.) "Bearer of God," meaning the Virgin Mary.

22 "Therefore I have been discovered as the immaculate Mother of God." Gray

comments: "The anagram is read from the sentence Ave Maria gratia plena Dominus tecum [Hail Mary full of grace the Lord is with thee]." (Gray to Edmund Blunden, 20 February 1933.)

23 "The hour of prayer," said the man. . . . "Give, Lord, your blessing. . . ." the opening words of the office of compline, in Catholic ritual, the last service of the day, completing the services of the canonical hours.

24 i.e., forty winks. (Gray suffered from insomnia from the time of his early manhood).

25 Cassiopeia and Ursa major ("The Big Bear" or, in the U.S., the "Big Dipper") are two constellations in the northern hemisphere which are easily identified by an amateur such as Park. He is particularly intent on identifying the "pole star" (or the North star) within the constellation of Ursa major as a way of orienting himself. As he notes in the next passage, the stars appear to wheel around the pole star in a vast curve.

26 "Are you asleep, Lord? Pardon me. I am affected by sadness, broken in sleep, I do not know what else. Give me permission to sleep. . ." "You have permission."

27 Held on 15 August, the Assumption is the principal feast of the Virgin Mary which celebrates (in the Roman Catholic Church) her reception into heaven with her body preserved from corruption.

28 Not to be confused with Westminster Abbey, Westminster Cathedral is the principal Roman Catholic church in England. A comparatively modern building (consecrated in 1910), it is located in central London. The cathedral's vast size (the nave is the largest in England) gives rise to the nightmare qualities of this description, in which it becomes "a railway station of intolerable vastness & silence."

29 Initials for Great Southern Railway.

30 According to Gray's sister, Beatrice Hannah, Gray "was deeply interested in the black man (he was a keen anthropologist) and used to say, although he was a white man he was black inside. . ." (*Two Friends*, ed. Sewell, p. 95).

31 Eastleach Martin, a parish in East Gloustershire on the River Leach.

32 "What is the word for a horse?"

"Tsup."

"Horses?"

"A pair are called Zup; more than that SSup."

"To ride?"

"Tsuba, zuba, ssuppa, just as you please."

33 "Praise ye the Lord. Praise, O ye servants of the Lord, praise the name of the Lord." Psalm 113:1

34 None or nones is the canonical office recited at 3 pm.

35 Literally, "Behold the great priest." Intoned at the entry of a bishop or the Pope into the church.

36 An armless chair used by bishops and other prelates when they are not officiating at their own church.

37 An ecclesiastical vestment, a sleeveless mantle covering the body and shoulders, worn over a long white tunic or alb by the celebrant at Mass.

38 The seat or throne of a bishop within the chancel (variant of faldstool, above note 37).

39 These were twenty-two African youths put to death between 1885–87 by the king of Buganda for refusing to submit to his homosexual demands. Given Gray's private history during the eighties and nineties, this dedication would have had a particular poignancy. (Healy, "Afterword," *Park*, p. 123.)

40 "Praise be to God."

41 A mythological creature who sometimes fell to earth (as in the nursery rhyme, "The Man in the moon/ Came down too soon. . . ." Gray is relieved that the boy does not seem alarmed at his strange (i.e., white) face.

42 (F.) "the customary compliments."

43 Devon and Cornwall are two counties in Southwest England. "Conclusa" in military terms means "blockaded."

44 A county in the eastern part of England, bordering on the North Sea.

45 The native pronunciation of "Park."

46 A Roman Catholic religious order founded in 1098 which emphasizes a well-balanced rule of silence, prayer, manual labour, and seclusion from the world.

47 All Souls is the day (usually November 2) in the Roman Catholic Church on which special masses are offered for the souls of all the faithful departed who still suffer in Purgatory.

48 "reciting, among others, the De profundis. . ." The "De profundis" ("Out of the depths. . .") is psalm 130, a penitential psalm recited in the service for All Souls' day.

49 In the Roman Catholic Church: a licence or permission granted by the Pope authorizing something to be done which the common law of the Church does not sanction.

50 The Dominicans, known as the "Blackfriars," one of the four great mendicant orders of the Roman Catholic Church. Founded by St. Dominic in 1215, their special mission is to preach the Christian gospel. Gray and his friend Andre Raffalovich were both Third Order (that is, lay brothers) of the Dominicans.

51 A fate also suffered by Gray himself by the age of 59.

52 One of the major frustrations suffered by Park is the inability of the Wapami to accept his numeration or chronology. The difficulty mirrors that of the historical

Mungo Park who, in his *Travels into the Interior of Africa* (1799), records of the Bambarra: "It is curious that in counting the cowries, they call eighty a hundred; whilst in all other things they calculate by the common hundred. Sixty is called a Manding hundred." (This source is cited in Healy's "Afterword" to *Park*, p. 122.)

Gray extends this numeration to chronological time. The Wapami are on "eonic" rather than solar time, but both they and Park mark the passage of the year through liturgical time, in particular through the sequence of the feasts of the Roman Catholic Church.

53 A court of record; archives.

54 One skilled in canon law; that is, the rule, law or decree of the Church.

55 In the Roman Catholic Church, a district which (usually for political reasons) is not yet a diocese and, as such, has been put under the charge of a vicar apostolic in lieu of a bishop.

56 Park is asked in a circumspect way whether he ever knew the great Dominican, St. Thomas Acquinas (1220–1274), whose works included the *Summa Theologica* (1266–73).

57 Two master–generals of the Dominican Order personally known to Gray.

58 A sly joke against the Dominicans. Park notices that the Dominican habit remains unchanged, except for the bare feet. As Healy comments: "Clearly, the Dominicans have been in need of reform and, like those of the Carmelites who followed St. Teresa and St. John of the Cross, are now a discalced order." (Healy, "Afterword," *Park*, p. 124).

It is also worth noting that Gray expressed at one time a wish to be laid out in the Dominican habit (as was his privilege as a member of the Third Order), but with his feet bare. (Gray to Michael Field, 7 November 1910).

59 "The pen of someone writing quickly."

60 Perhaps alluding to the tunnels of the London Underground (or "Tube") which was constructed between 1863 and 1914.

61 Vulcan was the Roman god of fire and patron of metal–workers, said to have erected forges on earth and manufactured many ingenious inventions (such as the armour of Achilles).

62 Gray's conjugation "would have reminded some Edinburgh Catholics of their archbishop, Dr. McDonald, who was in the habit of saying yes at least six times in rapid succession, and very quickly, at every point in a conversation where he could get it in" (Sewell, *In the Dorian Mode*, p. 166.)

63 Gray admitted to being irritable. On the 11 March 1919, he wrote his sister, Sarah Tinklar: "I am 53, rather a ruin and very obstinate & disobliging."

64 Town in Gloustershire, the site of the ancient Roman city of Corinium.

65 A sixth–century apostle of the Strathclyde Britons, responsible for large

scale conversions in what is now Scotland as well as elsewhere. Mungo has a special place and importance in Scottish lore. (Cf. Murry, "John Gray," p. 270).

66 Both titles alluded to are cited incorrectly. The first refers to Melville's *Typee* (the title of the first English edition in 1846 being *Four Months in the Marquesas Islands*). The Russian book is presumably Dostoevsky's *House of the Dead*; one early translation was titled *Buried Alive: Ten Years of Penal Servitude in Siberia* (Murray, "John Gray," p. 273).

67 An order of the Roman Catholic Church founded by St. Bruno in France (1084). An enclosed order, its members live an almost completely solitary life, its penitential practices justly earning it the reputation as the most austere of the religious orders.

68 A descendent of Seth, son of Enoch; the Bible credits Methusala with living 969 years (Genesis 5:21).

69 The prayer Actiones nostras ("Direct all our actions. . .") is a request for divine guidance, particularly at those times when actions are crucial (as at this opening of this session of the commission).

70 Tacketty boots are hobnail boots (about which Gray was quite particular; cf. the essay "Winter Walking," above, pp. . Forty pounds a quarter would have been the equivalent of Gray's stipend as a priest during the 'twenties. As for the fairly constant sense of misery, it was characteristic of Father Gray, who once stunned a Sunday luncheon party by announcing: "It's a miserable life altogether." (Essex, "The Canon in Residence," *Two Friends*, p. 160).

71 "I sleep, but my heart waketh" from the Song of Solomon 5:2. As Isobel Murray points out, this is a motto that has accompanied Gray from his early career; in the second *Dial*, to which Gray contributed three poems, Charles Ricketts published a wood engraving illustrating this verse, the first of a set which were to illustrate the *Song of Solomon* (Murray, "John Gray," p. 273).

72 i.e., he could fish and hunt small birds, but take no larger game.

73 That is, from the morning service of the Thursday preceding Easter (also known as "Maundy Thursday") until the evening prayers of Easter Sunday. Vespers is the sixth of the canonical hours of the breviary and is said in the evening.

74 (F.) "at bottom".

75 Armour for the leg below the knee.

76 "itinerary".

77 Located in the town of Ely, near Cambridge, the Cathedral is one of the architectural glories of England. The nave, western tower and transept monstare Norman.

78 The hymn "Decora lux. . ." ("Beautiful light. . .").

79 The confederated congregations of monks and lay brothers of the Roman Catholic Church, followers of the Rule of St. Benedict (c. 480–c. 547). The

Benedictine Order was innovative in replacing monastic austerity with a life of balance and moderation.

80 "in the year of our health".

81 Saint Alphonso de Liguori (1696–1787), an Italian priest and founder of the Redemptorist Order.

82 A gesture of contrition, probably that of lightly hitting his fist upon his chest.

83 "Benedi" is St. Benedict; "Metil" is St. Mechtilde, whose prayers Gray edited along with those of "Truda" who, the text explains, is St. Gertrude (see note 8 above). *O Beata Trinitas: The Prayers of St Gertrude and St Mechtilde* ed. the Rev. John Gray was published in London by Sheed & Ward in 1927.

84 A celebret is the commendatory letter necessary for a priest to be permitted to say mass in a church other than his own.

85 The Papal court, including all the authorities and functionaries.

86 Literally, "shocked surprise".

87 The head–servant of a wealthy household in foreign countries.

88 A variation of "the King's evil," or scrofula, which the king was popularly supposed to be able to cure by touching the diseased person.

89 When Odysseus visited the island of Circe returning from the Trojan War, she turned his companions into swine by means of a magical potion. Fortified himself against her poison, Odysseus demanded the restoration of his companions. After Circe complied, he then remained with her for a year, becoming with her the father of a child. Thus, Circe is the password for a dangerous seductress.

90 "the work of Iense," the latter being a mythical province of the empire.

91 The *Summa Theologica* (1266–1273) by St. Thomas Acquinas (see note 56 above).

92 "O thing of wonder! The Lord commands; I am a poor and humble servant." The lines are from the medieval hymn, "Panis angelicus" ("Bread of Angels").

93 The placing of the blessed host (the bread transfigured into the body of Christ) on public display in the monstrance (see note 96 below).

94 Presbytery, or the part of the church reserved for the clergy in the eastern part of the chancel beyond the choir, in which the altar is located.

95 A vestment of linen, of the surplice type, usually worn by bishops and abbots.

96 An open or transparent vessel of gold or silver in which the host is exhibited.

97 The uncial is a script of large rounded forms (not joined to each other) used in ancient manuscripts; rare in any dating after the 10 th century.

98 (Fr.) "choice morsels".

99 John Milton, "When the assault was intended to the city."

100 Samuel Taylor Coleridge, "Catullian Hendecasyllables."

101 William Shakespeare, Sonnet 2.

102 Typical of the ambiguity and confusions of the tale, this might refer to one of several occasions: probably to Christmas Eve, but also possibly to the eve of the birth of the Virgin Mary (celebrated on September 8) or the birth of John the Baptist (on June 24).

103 Cf. the essay "Winter Walking" (See note 2, under "Winter Walking.")

104 All villages or towns within the ambit of Gray's "holiday ground" in Cotswolds, located in the area around Cirencester (see note below).

105 Samuel Taylor Coleridge, opening lines of "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner."

106 Giovanni Battista Piranesi (1720–1778), Italian draftsman, printmaker and architect. His large prints of classical and postclassical Rome are famed for an unparalleled accuracy of vision and technical mastery of printmaking. The stairways mentioned here are probably a reference to the "Prisons," prints made c. 1745 depicting ancient Roman or Baroque ruins converted into fantastic, visionary dungeons filled with mysterious scaffolding and instruments of torture.

107 "And was made man." Equally, Gray was known to be deeply affected by the genuflection at these words of the Creed, which he performed with great gravity.

108 "The Body of our Lord Jesus Christ keep your soul now and in life everlasting amen": the words with which the host is given to the communicant at Mass.

109 Gray related a similar story about himself to William Muir:

"One day in the late eighteen–nineties, John Gray was walking up Coventry Street, in Soho, when a stranger approached, stopped him, and gave him some news that was, for him, utterly devastating. He made his way to a nearby church, Notre Dame de France, in Leicester Place, and knelt to pray before the image of the Blessed Virgin. A few minutes later, as it seemed to him, an old woman bearing keys came up to him and told him that she was going to close the church. It was night; he had been on his knees all day" (Sewell, *In the Dorian Mode*, p. 80).

110 Thus far, the report is a very precise account of the actual Father Gray at the time *Park* was written. The "vegetable remains," were tobacco.

111 "with God helping".

112 "The college for three–blood children is probably an allusion to the pre–Freudian notion of homosexuality as 'the third sex' and Raffalovich's advocacy of an early training for homosexuals in their responsibilities as 'superior uranians' who were to sublimate their sexuality in service to science, the arts or the Church" (Healy, "Afterword," *Park*, p. 122).

113 A traditional English country dance.

114 "according to the custom of the dead".

115 From the Latin *vulgatus*, "made public or common," a term applied to St. Jerome's Latin version of the Bible completed in 405. A recension made by order of Pope Clement VIII (1592–1605), called the Clementine text, is the authorized Bible of the Roman Catholic Church.

116 Doctor of Canon Law.

117 "Largire lumen vespere" "Bestow light in the evening."

118 Forty martyrs frozen to death in a fourth–century persecution in Turkey. Their feast is March 10.

119 The *Pharetra divini amoris* [The Quiver of Divine Love] was written by Joannes Justus Lanspergius (1489–1539).

120 A Carmelite convent. A mendicant order, the Carmelites were founded about 1155 near Mt. Carmel in Palestine, later spreading throughout western Europe. The Carmelite nuns, founded in 1452, are traditionally a cloistered order devoted to prayer.

121 "Thanks be to God," said the voice. "Thanks be to God."

122 August 15 (see note above).

123 Two tributaries of the Thames near its source in the Cotswolds (hence "courses of the young Thames.")

124 "I am feeling better."

125 Both mispronunciations of Cirencester (see note above).

126 A municipal borough in Wilshire, on the edge of the Cotswolds. Gray resided at The Old Bell, an inn in Malmesbury, during his annual holiday in the district.

About the Typography

Machinery is God–given. It is the nature of machinery to work true; and men should see that it does. Human intelligence should supply what is necessarily or accidentally lacking to machinery. Machine the servant should be servile, and man its master magisterial.

"God–made and Machine–made"

We hope John Gray would agree that in designing this book we have brought human intelligence and a touch of the Arts & Crafts spirit to what is lacking in the latest machinery the so–called desktop publishing revolution has to offer.

The book is set in the Adobe Type Library's version of Eric Gill's splendid typeface, Joanna (Monotype®). Gill designed Joanna especially for the Sheed & Ward edition of *Park: a fantastic story* and set the novella entirely in italic. It is exquisite. *The Selected Prose of John Gray* is set in Gill's equally beautiful Joanna roman. To give readers a view of his craft in designing the italic, we have set the headnotes, display type, contents pages, and jacket copy in Joanna italic.

With the generous assistance of librarians we have included reproductions of illustrations and initial letters from journals of the 1890s, *The Dial* and *The Pageant*. In the tradition of Ricketts and Shannon, we have added the superb contemporary craftsmanship of David Schwartz. He designed 14 hand–drawn initial letters (see pages ix–x for details).

Mr. Schwartz graduated a College Scholar from Cornell University (1989)—summa cum laude in Painting and Narrative, summa cum laude in Creative Writing. He currently serves as an editorial assistant for ELT Press, *English Literature in Transition, 1880–1920*, and *The Greensboro Review*.

Display & Text Type
Joanna Italic/Joanna Roman
Dust Jacket/Title–Page/Contents Page/Text
Designed by Robert Langenfeld
WordPerfect 5.1/Ventura Publisher Gem 3.0/CorelDraw 2.1
Printer: Thomson–Shore, Inc. Dexter, Michigan
Production Coordinator Diane Nourse

Colophon Figure Sheed & Ward 1932